

A N
A N S W E R
To several late
T R E A T I S E S,
Occasioned by a Book entituled a
D I S C O U R S E
Concerning the
I D O L A T R Y
Practised in the
C H U R C H of R O M E,
A N D
The Hazard of Salvation in the
Communion of it.

By *Edward Stillingfleet*, D. D. Chaplain
in Ordinary to His Majesty.

The First Part.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,
Printed by *R.W.* for *H. Mortlock*, and are to be
sold at the *Phoenix* in *St. Paul's Church-*
Yard, and *White Hart* in *Westminster*
Hall. 1 6 7 4.

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*Sam. Parker R^{mo} in Christo
Patri ac D^{no}, D^{no} Gil-
berto , Archi-Episc.
Cantuar. à sac. Dom.*

*April 15.
1673.*

AN
ANSWER
To several late
TREATISES,
Occasioned by a Book entituled a
DISCOURSE
Concerning the
IDOLATRY
Practised in the
CHURCH of ROME,
AND
The Hazard of Salvation in the
Communion of it.

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Hall. 1674.

ANSWER

TREATISES

DISCOURSES

IDOLATRY

CHURCH OF ROME

AND
THE HISTORY OF DIVISION IN THE

IN THE WESTERN CHURCH

OF THE EAST

OF THE EAST

2022:01



THE General Preface.

It is not for any pleasure I take in Controversie, nor out of a Resolution to maintain what I have once written, that I expose my self again to the Censures of some, and the Rage of others, in Defence of our Church against the Church of Rome: But out of a just sense of the Weight and goodness of the Cause I have undertaken; which (if my affection to it hath not strangely blinded my judgement) doth highly concern us as Men, as English Men, and as Christians. For it is the Cause of Sense and Reason, against
the

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the absurd Doctrines they impose on both; it is the Cause of our Nation against the Usurpation and Tyranny of a Forrain Power; it is the Cause of the true Faith and Christianity, against the Errors and Corruptions of the Roman Church. To abandon such a Cause as this, were to betray the things which ought to be most dear to us: for we cannot be reconciled to that Church on any easier terms, than renouncing our Sense and Reason, enslaving our Countrey, and hazarding our Salvation. And what can they give us in exchange for these?

It was the last of those three Heads, which gave occasion to the late so much railed at, and so little confuted Book: which no sooner appeared, but as if some dreadful Monster had risen out of the earth, some crossed themselves and kept as far out of the sight of it, as they could; others made hideous out-cries and grievous complaints; and the more fearful sort were forbidden either looking on it, or entertaining any dis-

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discourse about it. Upon which I pleased my self that I had not added another Chapter to the Book ; for if that number had agreed with the ten particulars, it had passed among them for the Beast with seven Heads and ten Horns ; and they would have been glad their City upon seven Hills could have been so excused. But this unusual noise and clamour awakened the curiosity of many who love to see strange sights ; and that which otherwise might have been wholly neglected as a Book, was enquired after and looked into, being represented as a Monster.

But when they found that this evil Spirit (as they accounted it) which themselves had raised, was not to be laid again by hard words and ill language ; they began to consider what other course was to be taken to suppress it. And forthwith there starts up a Young Sophister among them, and bids them be of good heart ; for by letting flye at him some Squibs and Crackers, he did not question, but he

(a) should

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should put this Monster into such a Rage, as to make him fall upon himself; which design being highly approved; in a short time came forth that dapper piece, called Doct. Stillingfleet against Doct. Stillingfleet. It was a notable plot, and cunningly managed; as the Reader may see by the following Answer to it. After him a Graver Person undertakes the service; but as Hasenmullerus tells us, when Ignatius Loyola sent one of his Brethren at Rome to dispossess a Person, he gave him this instruction, that he should be sure to come behind the Devil, if he would drive him out; accordingly this N. O. steals quite behind my Book, and began to confute it at the wrong end, hoping by that means to drive out the evil Spirit which he supposed to lodge in the Body of it. Which he hath performed with great dexterity and success, as the Reader may be fully satisfied in the Reply here following. These two I undertook, before any other appeared

Hasenmull.
hist. Jesuit.
ordin. c. 8.

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ed, and intended to have published these two Answers by themselves; but finding others that had written against me on the same argument I was willing to bring as much as I could together to prevent confusion or repetition. All which relating to the Principles of Faith, and the Resolution, and Rule of it, I made account to have dispatched at once; but finding the Book begin to swell into too great a bulk, I have respited some parts of it to another opportunity.

When those two men had done their Feats, an antient and experienced Exorcist; (and yet for all that no Conjuror) saw plainly this Spirit must be conjured down; and therefore knowing the great efficacy of Charms, he gives his Book the Title of ΤΩ ΚΑΘΟΛΙΚΩ Stillington. Which words put me almost in as great a fright as the Holy Chair would have done; I began to consider, whether Mengus or any other of their skilful men had ever used those Emphatical words be-

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fore; but I am willing to believe it was the sole invention of J. V. C. And I doubt not, but they will do well hereafter in Exorcisms, especially after the holy Potion, when the person to be dispossessed is made sufficiently sick with Rue and Sallet-oyl and other excellent Physick for Devils. I find by some of their Authors, it is a great matter to get the right name of the Spirit; this J. V. C. hath hit unluckily, in calling this Monster the Leviathan sporting in the waters, since they have thrown out so many empty Vessels for him to play with. And his three Books of Charms, have been no unpleasant entertainment; But he is gone; and I love not to tread hard on the graves of my enemies. What there appears material in him (if any thing do so) I shall consider it in its proper place; chiefly for the sake of my Judicious Adversary Dr. T. G. who was the first, and I think the only person that hath discovered his Book to be a Learned Treatise.

But

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But my generous Adversaries, finding so little success in single attempts, they next fall upon me with Chain-shot; viz. A Collection of several Treatises against Doct. Stillingfleet. To make up the number, they bring in one before published, to try an experiment what force that can have in conjunction, which had none of it self.

The first undertaker therein, is, the very calm and (according to his new Christian Name) Serene Mr. Cressly, the man that hath learnt to mortifie passions by Mystical Divinity; but is so far from being sublimed and rectified, by that Chymical way of devotion, that he seems yet to remain in the very dregs of them: the man, that hath so accustomed himself to Legends, that he cannot write against an Adversary, without making one of him. And although there be many very pleasant ones in his Church-History, yet I hardly think there are many more wonderful, than (if his insinua-

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tions had any colour of truth in them) the first part of my life had been. For by making me so active in those times , when I was incapable of understanding what they were , he seems to represent me as one that had so passionate a zeal for Presbytery in my Cradle , that I would suck of none but a Scottish Nurse ; that the first word I pronounced was Covenant ; that I would go to School to none but Lay-Elders ; and was cursing Merroz before the Parliament at eight years old. Is not this a hopeful beginning for a good Legend ? Will he, saith he, or they damn the execrable Covenant ? as though , I had ever any thing to do with it but when I renounced it ! If I should tell him , that as great a Friend as he takes me to have been to Presbytery and the late times , even then I was entred into Episcopal Orders by a most worthy and learned Prelate of our Church ; that , I never subscribed any Address to the Usurpers , as some in the World have done,

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done, and those who would now be thought the Kings most loyal Subjects; that I never drew off any one person from their Allegiance to the King to submit to the Popes Nuncio, (let those who do it clear themselves) even such an Apology would give too much countenance to so pitiful a Calumniator. I thank him that he hath not charged me with laying the first platform of Presbytery at Geneva, or having a hand in the first and second Admonitions in the dayes of Queen Elizabeth; and I might as well charge him with the Gunpowder Treason, as he doth me with any thing about the Covenant. By this we may guess what Ecclesiastical History we are to expect from him, who writes so at random about the matters of our own times. But the man is to be pitied; he was under one of Mother Juliana's fits, he writ with a good mind, but he knew not what. Some Vent must be given to a violent fermentation, else the Vessel might burst asunder; and I hope the good man is

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somewhat more at ease, since he purged away so much Choler. I assure him I can with pleasure read what he wrote with rage; and laugh at the violence of such passions; which like a Gun ill charged may give fire and make a great noise, but doth the greatest mischief to him that holds it. If I would pursue him through all his heats, I must undergo the Ordealy trial; touch firebrands without hurting my self: which although I might do, yet I know my Adversaries are so implacable, that even that would not convince them of my innocence. I leave him therefore to grow cooler and wiser; but I beseech him for his own sake, that he would attempt no more the justifying the union of nothing with nothing, and for the sake of Religion, that he would not call God any more an incomprehensible Nothing; a Description fit only for the Atheists Catechism. If there were any thing in his railing Book which looked like reason or argument, I might perhaps at my
leisure

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leisure be perswaded to answer it; though I do not love to have to do with mad men, no not in their lucid intervals.

The next that follows, is one that goes about to vindicate the Roman Churches Devotions and Doctrine of Repentance and Indulgences, he is a meer pattern of meekness, compared with S. C, he writes pertinently and without the others bitterness and passion. His great endeavour is to clear the honour of his Church, from the absurd Doctrines and practices charged upon it. And the force of all, he saith lyes in this, That where the Church hath defined nothing in her Councils, it is to no purpose to object that such Doctrines are taught by some in it; for those who defend their separation from the Communion of a Church by reason of its erroneous or corrupt Doctrines must make it appear, that those are taught by it, and the belief of them also exacted from its subjects. To
this

Roman
Doctrine
of Repen-
tance, &c.
vindicated
p. 19.

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this purpose S. C. likewise speaks (in some of his lucid intervals) and I perceive this is become a common Topick among them, to take off the odium of such opinions and practices as they are willing enough, but ashamed to defend, which I shall in this place briefly remove. The thing I was to prove was, that persons in the Communion of the Roman Church do run great hazard of their Salvation: for which I instanced particularly in several opinions and practices which are very apt to hinder a good life which is necessary to Salvation. Now a twofold Question here arises. 1. Whether the Church may justly be charged with those Doctrines and practices? 2. Whether, although the Church may not directly be charged to have decreed them in her Councils, yet so much countenance and encouragement be not commonly given to them in that Church, that particular persons do run great hazard of their salvation by reason of them? For which we are to consider

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der, that it hath been the method of the Roman Church to allow many more things in common belief and practice, than it hath dared for very shame to decree in Councils, especially when such things have been objected by her enemies. In this case it hath been thought the most prudent course for the Councils to speak deceitfully and in general terms, so as to give as little advantage as may be to their enemies, and yet to retain ground enough to uphold their former opinions and practices: Which still continuing in Vogue and reputation, become so much the more dangerous to mens Souls, because their Councils having had opportunity to have declared effectually against them were so far from it, that by their doubtful expressions they have left ground enough for the continuance of them. Now from hence the Directors of Conscience among them frame their opinions, and the people think it their duty blindly to follow them; and supposing any one among them should scruple any such

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such Doctrine or practice, to whom must be resort but to his Confessors, and will any such dare to condemn what is generally received, although not decreed by Councils? or if he should, dare any person rely on his private judgement when it is contrary to the most received Doctrine or practice? Besides, the promises of Infallibility are supposed by them to be primarily made to the Church, and only by way of representation to the Council; and therefore Doctrines or practices generally received and allowed by the Teachers of the Church and the Guides of conscience, must be received by them as true and good; for otherwise those promises would fail to the Church in its diffusive capacity, and consequently, supposing no General Council, it were possible for the most erroneous and pernicious Doctrines and practices to prevail in the Church, which must utterly overthrow all pretence to Infallibility. But in our present case we need not run so far, for I shall here prove that in the most material points insisted

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sisted on by N. O. viz. the Doctrine of the efficacy of the Sacraments ex opere Operato, and of Indulgences, we do justly charge the Church of Rome even in the decrees of her Councils with laying such a foundation, as doth overthrow the necessity of a good life. The way he takes to vindicate those points from this consequence is this, That the Sacramenta mortuorum, viz. Baptism and Penance which confer justifying Grace, do require a subject rightly disposed; And the Sacramenta vivorum, viz. Confirmation, Eucharist and Extreme Unction, do require the receiver to be actually in a State of Grace; the same, he saith of Indulgences, that the benefit of them doth suppose a man put into a State of Grace by the Sacrament of Penance; so that the whole matter is put upon this issue, whether their Doctrine concerning the conditions by which a man may

P. 44.
P. 47.
P. 79.

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may be put into a State of Grace, be not such as doth overthrow the necessity of a good life? And it being acknowledged that the Sacrament of Penance doth confer the Grace of justification on all persons rightly disposed for it, our only business is to enquire what necessary conditions their Church requires in order to it. For which we appeal to the words of the Council of Trent, for Session 14. c. 4. That

Et quamvis sine Sacramento Pœnitentie per se ad justificationem perducere peccatorem nequeat (attritio); tamen eum ad Dei gratiam in Sacramento Pœnitentie impetrandam disponit. Concil. Trident. Sess. 14. c. 4.

plainly determines, that imperfect contrition or attrition although it cannot bring men to justification without the Sacrament of Penance, yet it doth dispose men for obtaining the Grace of God by the Sacrament of Penance. If we joyn this now with another decree of the same Council, viz.

* That the Sacraments do conferr

* Si quis dixerit Sacramenta novæ Legis non continere Gratiam quam significant, aut gratiam ipsam non poenitentibus obicem non conferre—Anathema sit. Sess. 7. Can. 6.

Si quis dixerit non dari gratiam per hujusmodi Sacramenta semper & omnibus, quantum est ex parte Dei, etiamsi ritè ea suscipiant, sed aliquando & aliquibus, Anathema sit. Can. 7.

Grace

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Grace on all those who are disposed to receive it; I leave it now to any one to judge, whether from hence it doth not necessarily follow, that all those that have but imperfect contrition, or bare attrition for their sins, are by the Sacrament of Penance put into a State of Grace, according to the Doctrine of the Council of Trent? And how far this overthrows the necessity of a good life, will appear from the explication of contrition and attrition given by the same Council. Contrition is defined, to be, ^{Self. 14. c. 4.} a grief of mind and detestation of sin committed, with a purpose of sinning no more; therefore imperfect contrition or attrition must be such a grief and detestation of sin past, as implies but an imperfect purpose of sinning no more. From which it evidently follows, that by the Doctrine of this Council a man may be put into a State of Grace without so much as a firm or perfect purpose of sinning no more. And can there

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there be a Doctrine invented by men that doth more effectually destroy the necessity of a good life than this doth? For the State of Grace puts a man actually into the favour of God; and supposing him to fall into mortal sin afterwards, all he needs to do, is only to repeat the same kind of attrition and receive the Sacrament of Penance and he is perfectly sound again and recovers the Favour of God. I know the Council there saith, That this attrition must exclude voluntatem peccandi, as O. N. observes; but that implies no more than a mans not having at that time a purpose to sin again; and the Council distinguishes it from the propositum non peccandi de cætero, or the purpose not to sin again, which the Council applies to contrition, as the other to attrition. And Cajetan himself quoted by O. N. calls it an imperfect purpose of not sinning. So that after all the evasions which have been yet, or can be produced, the Roman Churches Doctrine of

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of Repentance and Indulgences doth most dangerously obstruct devotion and a good life. I desire therefore O. N. and his Brethren to be a little more sparing in their censures of us as unfaithfully representing the Doctrine of their Church, for we understand it much better, and represent it more truly, than they desire.

But supposing the words of the Council were ambiguous in this matter, what better help can we have to understand it, than the sense of their most eminent and learned Instructors of Conscience? and those not of the single Order of Jesuits, as some would have it believed, but of all sorts among them.

Melchior Canus who was far enough from being a Friend of the Jesuits, saith expressly, Although a man knows he hath not contrition, but bare attrition, he may come to the Sacrament and receive grace by it; for which he gives this reason, because Baptism and Penance, are

Melch. Can.
no Relict.
de Pœnit.
part. 6. p.
932.

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Sacramenta mortuorum ; and therefore those who are under mortal sin if they have attrition whereby the impediment is removed may not only come to them, but go away with the Grace conferred, because the Sacraments alwayes conferr Grace, where the impediment is removed.

*Morinus de
Pœnit. Sa.
gram. 10 l.
8 c. 4. n.
27.*

And he is followed herein, saith Morinus, not only by Lopez, Pesantius, Nicol. Isambertus Professor of Divinity at Paris, but by the far greatest number of their modern Divines. I shall not

*La Morale
de Iesuits
liv. 2. cb.
2. p. 253.*

so much as mention the Jesuitical Casuists whose Testimonies are produced in the Jesuits Morals, or Provincial letters, such as Filliutius, Amicus, Sa, Escobar, Bauny, &c. But I shall name some of far greater Authority among them. O. N. frequently cites Paul

*Layman.
Tho. Mo
val. l. 5.
tract 6. c.
2. sect. 2.*

Laynian with expressions of esteem, and he determines that true contrition is not necessary to the Sacrament of Penance after the commission of mortal

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mortal sin, but attrition is sufficient although a man know it to be only attrition. If they had made attrition only necessary to the Sacrament of Baptism, they might have pleaded, that they had not destroyed the necessity of a good life afterwards to preserve the Grace conveyed in Baptism; but we see in the case of mortal sin afterwards toties quoties no more is necessary but a new Act of Attrition, and that not only when a man mistakes it to be contrition; but though a man knows it to be bare attrition. I confess Cardinal Tolet, although he asserts the substance of the Doctrine, yet he saith, attrition only serves when it is mistaken for contrition; but this Morinus tells us the later Divines laugh at and explode. Cardinal Lugo not only contends for the Doctrine, but asserts it to be the Doctrine of the Council of Trent, viz. That attrition with the Sacrament of Penance is sufficient for the Grace of Justification; and

Tolet.
Summ. cas.
l. 3. c. 4.

Morinus de
Pœnit. l. 8.
c. 4. n. 1.

Lugo de
Pœnit. disp.
5. sect 9. n.
130, 135.

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quotes Suarez, Vasquez and Maratius, as sufficiently proving from the words of the Council, that attrition is the next disposition to the Grace of justification conveyed by the Sacrament; and this attrition he there shews against Sylvius, doth not imply an imperfect love of God above all; which is directly contrary to O. N. And in another place he proves, that a man is not bound alwayes to contrition for his sins, although they be mortal; for saith he, if he were, then a man having attrition cannot be excused, but only by invincible Ignorance from a new mortal sin in coming to the Sacrament of Penance without contrition, because some time is commonly supposed to intervene between a mans attrition and his justification by the Sacrament, in which time he would sin mortally by omitting contrition, if he were obliged to it; but this

L'go. 201.
7. sect. II.
201.

saith

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saith he, is against the common opinion of Divines, that a man contracts any new guilt by omitting contrition. Nay, he afterwards determines, that a man that hath received the Sacrament of Penance with bare attrition is not bound, under the guilt of mortal sin, for omitting it, to an act of contrition at the point of death; which is, he saith, the commonly received opinion among them, and he quotes Diana, Coninch, Becanus, Layman, Fagundez, Faber, Turrianus, Salas and others for it. The great argument he brings, is, because Confessors do not think themselves obliged to put men in mind of an act of contrition at that time as necessary, as common experience shews. And are not such Confessors excellent Guides to Heaven the mean while? If they be, they have found out a much broader way and wiler gate than ever Christ intended. What not

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Greg. de
Valent.
Tom. 4.
disp. 7. q. 8.
p. 4. lect.
S. cura pa-
test.
Morin. de
pœnit. l. 8.
c. 4. n. 15.

Id. ib. n. 26.

one single act of contrition necessary! No, not at the point of death! What pity it is for sinners, you have not the keeping of Heaven-gates? How do they want the Sacrament of Penance in Hell, for no doubt there is attrition good store there! But above all of them, commend me to honest Gregor. de Valentiâ, who not only makes contrition unnecessary, but saith, it is rather a hindrance to the effect of the Sacraments. From whence Morinus justly infers, that a Confessor ought not to perswade the Penitent to Contrition; nor the Penitent to endeavour after it. Nay, Morinus shews, that grave men and famous in their Church do assert, that a Penitent having received the Sacrament of Penance, is not bound to so much as one act of contrition or the Love of God in order to his reconciliation with God. Yea, although a man hath hated God to the last act of his life if

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if he receives the Sacrament of Penance, they deny that it is necessary for him to be contrite for his sins or to love God. Nothing could go

beyond this but what follows in him, That the

excellency of the Evangelical Sacraments a-

bove the legal consists

in this, that the Evan-

gelical Sacraments have

freed us from the most heavy yoke

of contrition and the Love of God.

O admirable Guides of Conscience! I do

not at all question, but Jews, Turks and

Heathens have a much better and truer

notion of Repentance, than these men;

the Pagan Philosophers were Chri-

stians to them. And what injury have I

done them now, in charging such things

upon them which obstruct devotion, and

overthrow the necessity of a good life? For

I hardly think it possible to contrive a Do-

ctrine more effectual for that end, than

(b 4)

to

Sacramentorum Evangelicorum supra legalia præstantiam & prærogativam in hoc potissimum fulgere, quod Evangelica gravissimo Contritionis & Directionis Dei iugo nos liberaverint. Moria. de Pœnit. l. 8 c. 4. n. 26.

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to tell men that the Sacraments of the Gospel do free men from that heavy yoke of Contrition and the Love of God.

But supposing there were no such Foundation for this Doctrine in the Council of Trent, as we see there is, would there be no danger to mens Salvation, if their Confessors generally told them these things, and they knew it to be the current opinion among them? Is there no danger of falling into the ditch when the Blind lead the Blind, unless a General Council expressly allow of it? Is there no danger by Empiricks and Mountebanks, unless the whole Colledge of Physitians approve them? And of all sorts of Empiricks, the worst are such Casuists and Confessors. Is there no way to magnifie the Sacerdotal office, unless they have a Power to Trepan Souls into eternal flames for want of true repentance; by making them believe the Priests absolution with bare attrition will make all even with God? Or is this

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this Doctrine only a Decoy to draw great sinners into your nets? And all this while is your Church innocent, which at least sees and will not reform these things?

In A. D. 1665. 24. of September and 18. May, 1666. the Congregation of the Inquisition at Rome under Alexander 7. took upon them to censure forty five several Propositions of the late Casuists, as scandalous and pernicious to the Souls of men, but not one of them relates to this Doctrine of repentance, although the Jansenists in France had complained of it. Whence could this arise but from looking on it as the Doctrine of their Church? Indeed I find that on May 5. 1667. The Pope caused a Decree to be published straitly forbidding all persons in their debates about Attrition, to condemn each other; but it is worth our while to understand, what this controversy was, viz. Whether bare attrition doth require an act of the love of God; and although the Negative

be

Index Expurg. Alex.
7. n. 87, 88.

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be there said to be the more common opinion, yet the Pope would not have the others that affirmed it to be censured. But not the least word against the sufficiency of bare attrition. Are any of the Books censured which assert this Doctrine? Nay, they are published with great approbations. Are any of the Defenders of it discountenanced? Nay, they are Persons in the highest esteem, dignity, and Authority among them. Are any cautions given to Confessors to beware of these Doctrines? Nay, these very Books are purposely written and approved for their instruction and use. And if their Church be innocent after all this, so was the Jewish Church in our Saviours time; for the corruptions that were then among them had no decree of the Sanhedrin, that I find, for them; it was only their Schoolmen and Casuists, the Scribes and Pharisees which introduced them. And yet our Saviour thought mens Souls in danger, when he bid them beware

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ware of the leaven of the Pharisees. I confess, when we debate the causes of Separation from their Communion, we think it then reasonable to alledge no more, than what they impose on all to believe and practise (and we have enough of all Conscience in that kind, without going farther) but when we represent the hazard of Salvation to particular persons, we may then justly charge them with the pernicious Doctrines and practices which are received and allowed among them, although not decreed by the Church in Councils. For otherwise it would be just, as if one should say to a man, that asked him, whether he might safely travel through such a Country? yes, without doubt you may, for although there be abundance of Thieves and High-waymen, yet the Prince or the State never approved them, or gave them licence to rob Travellers. Do you think any man would venture his person or his purse, on no better security? Yet
such

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such security as this, if it were true is all that such moderate men as O. N. or his Brethren can give as to the Roman Church; for they dare not deny the bad consequence of the doctrines and practices charged upon them, but only say, The Church hath not decreed them. So much I thought necessary to say to this newest and most plausible pretence, which is made use of by the best Advocates for the Roman Church.

And now farewell to Moderation; for the two next which appeared on the Stage against me, were two Jesuits; the one sent over a Book, which if we look only at the bulk and thickness was a very substantial one, called by an odd Antiphrasis, Reason and Religion: I have endeavoured to draw off all the Spirit I could find in it, in the following discourses, but I am forced to leave a vast quantity of Phlegm and Caput Mortuum behind. I shall say no more of him here, having occasion to speak so much of him in the Discourses about the Principles of faith, which
will

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will in a little time be ready to appear.

The other is the stout Defender of Ignatius Loyola and the whole Order of Jesuits; What, one man undertake to defend the Jesuits as to their Principles and Practices! and that in this Age, which so well understands their Maxims and Conduct! and in England too, where those of other Orders and the Secular Priests love them so dearly! But nothing is too brave or difficult, for a Jesuit to attempt, however he comes off in it. As to Ignatius Loyola, I will come to terms with him; if what he confesses as to his ignorant Zeal, pious simplicity, frequent visions and extasies, extravagant preaching, unwarrantably contempt of Superiours do not prove him a Fanatick, I am content to let him go. But what if Ignatius himself being grown old, did suspect such frequent extasies and visions for illusions? I desire him to look Ribadineira, in his larger life to that purpose. But this matter of Fanaticism

must

Ribadin.
vit. Ignat.
l. 5. c. 10.

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must be referred to another place. I shall now only give a taste of the Jesuits excellent way of defending the principles destructive to Government which I charged his Order with.

P. 38.

The first was, That Government was so originally in the People, that they by their Representatives may call their Sovereign to an account, and alter the form of Government. Now mark this Answer. This principle (whatsoever truth it may have in speculation) is by no means to be preached to the People, who are apt enough of themselves to stretch cases, and pick quarrels with their best Governours, yet was it taught many Ages before the Jesuits were so much as thought of. Well-fare the man for his plain-dealing; the Doctrine it seems is true enough, but the people are not fit to be trusted with the management of it, no, not in their places and callings; no, no, let the Jesuits

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Jesuits alone with these things, they know just the very nick of time, when to be Judges and Executioners too.

The next principle is, the Popes power of deposing Princes, to which P. 391 he again answers roundly. You are then to know, Sir, that the Doctrine was long ago taught by almost all Orders and Professions, Seculars, Regulars, Divines, Lawyers, before the Jesuits were in Being. A very Catholick Doctrine it seems it is! What a stir do other people make with mincing this matter, I know not how; give me a man that speaks out, and lets Princes understand what their general Doctrine is in this matter, lest they may possibly be deceived, as though it were only the bold assertion of some few Persons among them. What wonder then, saith he, if Bellarmin and three or four more Jesuits were carryed away with such a Torrent of Doctors who went before them? Nay, in my opinion the only

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only wonder is, how any Persons among them dare think otherwise, this Doctrine having as he tells us, so Catholick a consent to the truth of it. But in earnest, Sir, is the Doctrine true, or false? Nay, Sir, I beseech you to excuse me in that: for as he saith, afterwards about the Popes power of absolving Subjects, I beg leave to wave such curious Controversies: What, a Jesuit beg leave to wave curious Controversies! What is become of all their vast Tomes of Scholastical and Casuistical Divinity? Are no curious Controversies handled in them? And were you bred up among them and yet hate Controversies merely because curious? No, no. We understand you better than so. That is only a curious Controversie with you which endangers your safety, if you speak out, for it is a needless kind of curiosity for a man to betray himself. Here in these practical Countreys it is sometimes dangerous speaking Truth in their

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their sense ; but at such a speculative place as Rome is , there those may be wholesome and Catholick Truths , which here are but niceties and curiosities. But P. 40. doth he not say , the Jesuits have solemnly renounced the Doctrine ? Yes , but have a care how far you believe him : we poor simple Islanders might understand by this , that they had declared it to be false and pernicious. There is no such matter I will assure you , but upon the stirrs in France they renounced the publishing it, they renounced it as they were in France, but thought it good Doctrine at Rome : they are forbidden to treat any more of it, because of the odiousness of it to Princes, and that is all the renouncing they ever meant.

The third Principle is , the lawfulness of killing Kings , as to which, he saith , he cannot name the person that ever taught it in those Terms : a good reason for that , because when they would have them killed

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they call them Tyrants. And so he grants Dominicus Soto and Mariana have asserted it, he might have named more if he had pleased. I could not desire a more pleasant task, than to pursue him through the remainder of his discourse, wherein he undertakes to vindicate the Jesuits practices, but these have been so much exposed by men of their own Religion, that I may spare my pains in this Preface; and we may easily guess how hard he was put to it, when he makes the letter of the Bishop of Angelopolis to be forged at Port-Royal by the Jansenists. And thus he hath shifted the fault from the Indies to Europe, and to vindicate some Papists there from Idolatry, he charges others here with forgery. And yet to this as a full Answer, the late Answerer of the Seasonable Discourse doth referr us. And out of his admirable learning and skill in History desires his Adversary, for his satisfaction that there can be no danger of Resuming Abby Lands if

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if Popery should return, to go into Germany where there are so many Papist and Protestant Princes, Noble men and Gentlemen, that have (especially since the Treaty at Munster) either Bishopricks, Abbeys or the like confirmed to them by the Pope. How! confirmed to them by the Pope! What will not these men dare to say? I perceive Ignorance serves them for other purposes than merely to be the Mother of Devotion. If at least this worthy Author could be Ignorant of so notorious a thing as Pope Innocents Bull published on purpose to Null the Treaty at Munster, as prejudicial to the Catholick Religion, to the Apostolical See, to Churches and other Holy Places and Persons and Ecclesiastical Rights. In the body of the Bull he saith, that his Nuncio there (who

*Santissimi
Domini
N. D. Innocentii Divina
Provi-
dentia Pa-
pe 10. De-
claratio-
nis Ar-
ticulorum
Nuper a Pa-
cis Germa-
nicæ Religio-*

ni Catholicæ, Sedis Apostolicæ, Ecclesiis, aliisque Locis piis ac Personis, & Juribus Ecclesiasticis quomodo libet præjudicialium. Romæ ex Typographiâ Reverend. Cameræ Apostolicæ. A. D. 1651.

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was afterwards Pope Alexander the seventh) did protest against these Articles, as void, null, unjust, and agreed upon by persons that had no power, and that they were to be so looked on by all. But the Pope did not think this sufficient, but declares all those Articles that related to liberty of Religion, Church-lands, or any Ecclesiastical Rights, or brought any the least prejudice to them, or might be thought or pretended so to do, to be null, void, invalid, unjust, damned, reprobate, vain, and without any force or power, and that they shall remain so for ever; and that no person, though never so much sworn to observe those articles shall be bound by such oath; no right, title, plea, prescription, shall accrue to any by vertue of them : and therefore out of the Plenitude of Apostolical power he doth absolutely damn, repro-

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reprobate, null and cassate all those articles, and protests before God of the nullity of them; and restores all persons and places to their ancient possessions notwithstanding them, with very much more to the same purpose. This was dated at Rome apud Sanctam Mariam Majorem sub Anulo Piscatoris die 26 Novemb. and solemnly published there the third of Jan. 1651. in the eighth year of his Pontificat. Call you this, Sir, the Popes confirming them! It is credible that he who in the beginning of his Answer had charged the late Protestant Books, (which he most ingeniously calls Libels) to be crammed with nothing else but what we know to be false, should within a few Pages have the confidence to affirm in the face of the world so notorious an untruth? But I leave this ingenious Author, to be Chastised for this and other his extravagancies, by his worthy Adversary, and return to my own.

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After all these unsuccessful attempts, at last the Knight himself resolves to encounter the Dragon ; and accordingly he buckles on his armour, mounts his Steed, and, according to all antient and modern Pictures of the combat, directs his lance into the very mouth of it ; wisely considering, if the head were mortally wounded, the whole Body would fall to the ground. After him at a convenient distance follows his Squire I. S. who had a particular spight at the Dragons Tayl, and without fear or wit falls unmercifully upon it, and in his own opinion, hath chopt it into a thousand pieces. But such mischievous creatures whose strength lyes scattered in all their parts, do often rise up when they are triumphed over as dead, and give their most deadly wounds, when they are thought to lye gasping for breath.

It happened that when T. G's Answer to the first part of my Book came out, I was before engaged in the Defence of the Protestant principles of faith against the
Guide

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Guide in Controversies and E. W. (the Author of those two learned Treatises as T. G. calls them, Protestantism without Principles, and Religion and Reason) part of which being then in the Press, I was forced to go through with that, before I could take his Book into consideration. And thereupon I resolved to dispatch all those which relate to the Principles of Faith together; and then to proceed to the Principles of Worship in answer to him, which (God willing) I intend as soon as the former part is finished. P. 312.

All that I shall take notice of him here, is to represent the ingenuity of his dealing with me in his Preface, wherein he charges me with dissenting from the Doctrine of the Church of England in accusing the Church of Rome of Idolatry. And by this one Instance I desire the Reader to judge what Candour and sincerity he is to expect in his Book.

For the sense of the Church of England, I appealed to the Book of Homi-

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lies : not to any doubtful, or general, or single passage therein, but to the design of one of the largest and most elaborate Homilies in the whole Book; consisting of three several parts, the last of which is said not to be meerly for the People, but for the instruction of those who were to teach them. The design of that last part is thus set down. 1. That Popish Images and the Idols of the Gentiles are all one concerning themselves. 2. That they have been and be worshipped in our time in like form and manner as were the Idols of the Gentiles. And for that Idolatry standeth chiefly in the mind, it shall in this part first be proved that our Image-maintainers, have had, and have the same opinions and judgement of Saints whose Images they have made and worshipped as the Gentiles Idolaters had of their Gods; and afterwards shall be declared that our Image-main-

Book of
Hom. second
Tome, p.
46.

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maintainers and worshippers have used and use the same outward rites, and manner of honouring, and worshipping their Images, as the Gentiles did use before their Idols, and that therefore they commit Idolatry, as well inwardly as outwardly, as did the wicked Gentiles Idolaters; and this that Homily is intended for the proof of: which it doth very fully. But, saith T. G., why did I not appeal for the sense of our Church to the 39 Articles? As though the approbation of the Book of Homilies were not one of them, viz. the 35. The second Book of Homilies, the several Titles whereof we have joyned under this Article (*among which Titles the second is this of the Peril of Idolatry*) doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine and necessary for these times. Which Articles were not only allowed and approved by the Queen, but confirmed by the
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subscription of the hand of the Arch-Bishop and Bishops of the upper House, and by the subscription of the whole Clergy in the nether House of Convocation A. D. 1571. Now I desire T. G. to resolve me whether men of any common understanding would have subscribed to this Book of Homilies in this manner, if they had believed the main Doctrine and design of one of them had been false and pernicious? as they must have done if they had thought the practice of the Roman Church to be free from Idolatry. I will put the case, that any of the Bishops then had thought the charge of Idolatry had been unjust, and that it had subverted the foundation of Ecclesiastical Authority, that there could have been no Church, or right ordination if the Roman Church had been guilty of Idolatry; would they have inserted this into the Articles, when it was in their power to have left it out? and that the Homilies contained a wholesome and Godly Doctrine, which in
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their consciences they believed to be false and pernicious? I might as well think that the Council of Trent would have allowed Calvins Institutions, as containing a wholesome and Godly Doctrine; as that men so perswaded would have allowed it the Homily against the Peril of Idolatry. And how is it possible to understand the sense of our Church better, than by such publick and authentick acts of it, which all Persons who are in any place of trust in the Church must subscribe, and declare their approbation of them? This Homily hath still continued the same, the Article the very same, and if so, they must acknowledge this hath been, and is to this day the sense of our Church. But saith T. G. the subscribing the Book of Homilies, as containing a godly and wholesome Doctrine, doth not evince that every particular Doctrine contained in it is such. Be it so: but I hope it doth evince, that the Subscribers did not think
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Book of
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the main Doctrine of any one Homily to be false? Surely there is a great deal of difference between some particular passages and expressions in these Homilies, and that which is the main design and Foundation of any one of them. But in this case we are to observe, that they who deny the Church of Rome to be guilty of Idolatry, do not only look on the Charge as false, but as of dangerous Consequence; and therefore although men may subscribe to a Book in general as containing wholesome and godly Doctrine, though they be not so certain of the Truth of every passage in it, yet they can never do it with a good conscience, if they believe any great and considerable part of the Doctrine therein contained to be false and dangerous. Such a subscription would be as apparently shuffling and dishonest as is the evasion of this Testimony which T. G. makes use of for want of a better.

I shall in the next place shew the current Doctrine of the Church ever since the Re-
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formation to have been agreeable to this Homily of the Peril of Idolatry. In the Injunctions published by K. Edward VI. A. D. 1547. the extirpation of Popery is called the suppression of Idolatry and Superstition. In the second year of Edward VI. Arch-Bishop Cranmer published his Articles of Visitation, whereof the sixth and the last are about the taking away Images, Pictures, and all other Monuments of feigned Miracles, Pilgrimages, Idolatry and Superstition. In the second Liturgy by Edward VI. after the Communion, was a Rubrick annexed, in which the Adoration of the Host is expressly called Idolatry. This is that very Rubrick, of which T. G., according to his excellent skill in the Offices of our Church, saith it is not yet more than a dozen years since it was inserted into the Communion Book; which he might have found above a 100. years before in the Book of Edward VI.

In

P. 214.

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In the Injunctions of Queen Elizabeth, A. D. 1559. Art. 2. and 23. all Shrines, Tables, Pictures, &c. are commanded to be taken away and destroyed, and all other Monuments of feigned Miracles, Idolatry and Superstition. And that we may not think it was only a sudden heat at the first Reformation which made them charge the Church of Rome with Idolatry, long after in A form of Thanksgiving in the 37. of Queen Elizabeth, A. D. 1594. Popery is called that Idolatrous Religion: as it was in the Beginning of her Reign in the excellent Apology for the Church of England. And I desire him, or any one else, to produce any one Bishop or Divine of note in the Church of England, who during all her Reign did deny the Church of Rome to be guilty of Idolatry. But why then was it not inserted in the 39 Articles? in which T. G. observes, the Adoration of Images is not

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not rejected as Idolatry, but only as a fond thing, vainly invented, nor as repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, but as being rather repugnant to the Word of God, which plainly gives us to understand, that they had done their endeavours to find a command, but could not. *A most ingenious Criticism!* when himself and all others of their Divines yield, that Adoration of Images, which our Church charges them with, Art. 22. (viz. not barely worshipping, but adoration of images) to be idolatry, and plainly repugnant to Scripture. Were the composers of our Articles so senseless as not to think Idolatry repugnant to Scripture; or not to think adoration of images to be Idolatry; or not to think the Church of Rome guilty of it, when the Article saith, The Romish Doctrine concerning worshipping and adoration as well of Images as of Reliques, &c.? It is not meerly the practice used in the Church

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Church of Rome, but their very Doctrine concerning adoration of Images which is here charged; and can any Church teach adoration of Images, and not be guilty of Idolatry? And for his Criticism about being rather repugnant, it had been utterly lost if he had looked into the Latin Articles where the words are, immo verbo Dei contradicit; whereby it appears, that rather is not used as a term of diminution, but of a more vehement affirmation.

I now come to the exceptions he takes to the particular Testimonies I produced of the most eminent Bishops and Divines of our Church, ever since the Reformation; who have all concurred in this charge of Idolatry. Two parts in three he excepts against as incompetent witnesses in the case: how few of the Jury would any Malefactor allow if such frivolous exceptions might serve his turn?

The two first he excepts against are the two Arch-Bishops Whitgift and Abbot as Puritanically inclined. But

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as it unhappily falls out, one of them was never mentioned by me, and the other never till now suspected for a Puritan. The Abbot I mentioned, was not George Abbot Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, but Robert Abbot Bishop of Salisbury; and it is the first time we ever heard that a Bishop of Salisbury was suspended from his Metropolitcal Jurisdiction. But they of the Church of Rome have a faculty of doing greater wonders with five words, than Changing a Bishop into an Arch-Bishop. I hope he understands the Church he is of, better than that he hath left; or else we are like to have a sad account of History from him. But why I beseech you, after all his zeal and indefatigable pains for the Church of England, must Arch-Bishop Whitgift be thrown away to the Puritans? If he had proved T. C. at the same time Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, there might have been some reason to suspect Whitgift to have been of the Puritan side;

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for all the world know they were great adversaries on that very account of the Puritan cause. But was not Whitgift for the Lambeth Articles? And what then? Are the Dominicans Puritans and no Papists? If your Church may have liberty not to determine those nice points, why may not ours? and so both parties remain of our Church, as long as they contradict no received Articles among us. But the Lambeth-Articles were never intended for any more than as *Responsa Prudentum* to silence disputes in the University. And I believe none of the Puritan party after that, took Arch-Bishop Whitgift to be a Patron of their Cause.

But if these will not serve his turn, I have others ready, whom for meer shame he will not say were Puritans, or Puritanically inclined. And the first of these is an Arch-Bishop too, and that is Arch-Bishop Bancroft; and if he be cast out for a Puritan, surely there never

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was any Bishop of the Church of England. In his Sermon preached at Paul's Cross, on 1 John 4. 1. he hath these words speaking of the Papists. The Popish false Prophets will suffer the people to try nothing, but do teach them wholly to depend on them; and to that purpose they have indeed three notable sleights. First they forbid them the reading of the Scriptures. And the better to be obeyed therein, they will not permit the Scriptures to be Translated into the Vulgar Tongue. Whereof it came to pass, that the people were so easily seduced, and drawn from Christ to the Pope; from his merits to the Saints, and their own merits; from his bloody sacrifice, whereby only sins are remitted, to their most dry and fruitless sacrifice; from the spiritual food of his Body and Blood, unto a carnal and Caperna-

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naitical Transubstantiation, from the calling upon his name to an Invocation of Saints: and from their sure trust and confidence in his death, to a vain imagination of the vertue of their Masses, Pilgrimages, Pardons, and I know not what intolerable Superstition and Idolatry. *I hope Arch-Bishop Bancroft may for once pass for no Puritan with T.G. But what will he say, if the only persons he produces as most partial of his side, do give in evidence against him? Bishop Mountague is the first, whose words are these in the Book cited by him. Our Predecessors and Fathers coming late out of Popery, living near unto Papists and Popish times, conversing with them, having been muzzled and brought up amongst them and knowing that Images used to be crept unto, incensed, worshipped, and adored among them, &c. What thinks he, is not this all one as to charge them*

Appeal p.
1263.

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them with Idolatry? And more plainly in his former Book, But whatsoever you say, however you qualifie the thing with gentle words, we say in your practice you far exceed; and give them that honour which is *Latria*, a part of Divine respect and worship. And afterwards saith, the people go to it with down right adoration, and your new Schools defend that the same respect is due to the representer, as must be given to the representee. So that the Crucifix is to be revered with the self same honour that Christ Jesus is. A blasphemy not heard of till *Thomas Aquinas* set it on foot. Clear these enormities, and others like these, then come and we may talk and soon agree concerning honour and respect unto Reliques or Images of Saints, or Christ; till then we cannot answer it unto our Maker, to give his honour un-

Answer to
the *Ga. 8.*
p. 319.

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to a Creature. *His next is Pet. Heylin ; And now I hope we have at last hit upon a man far enough from being a Puritan ; yet this very Person gives plain evidence against him. For in his fourth Sermon on the Tares preached at White-Hall, January 27. 1638. He hath these words. So it is also in the point of Images, first introduced into the Church for Ornament, History, and imitation. Had they staid there it had been well, and no fault found with them.— But when the Schools began to State it, that the same Veneration was to be afforded to the Type and Prototype, then came the Doctrine to the growth. When and by whom, and where it was first so stated, is not easie to determine, and indeed not necessary. It is enough that we behold it in the fruits. And what fruits think you could it bear, but most gross Idolatry, greater than which was never*

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ever known among the Gentiles ;
Witness their praying not before ,
but to the Crucifix , and calling on
the very Cross ; the wooden and
material Cross , both to increase
their righteousness and remit their
sins. And for the Images of the
Saints , they that observe with what
laborious Pilgrimages , magnificent
processions , solemn offerings , and
in a word , with what affections ,
prayers , and humble bendings of
the body , they have been and are
worshipped in the Church of Rome ,
might very easily conceive that she
was once again relapsed into her
ancient Paganism. *With much more
to the same purpose. His only person
remaining , is Mr. Thorndike , a man
of excellent Learning and great piety , but
if we should grant , that he held some
thing singular in this matter ; what
is that to the constant opinion of our
Church ? and yet even Mr. Thorn-*
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like himself in a paper sent by him to some whom T. G. knows, not long before his death, saith, That, to pray to Saints for those things which only God can give (as all Papists do) is by the proper sense of the words down-right Idolatry. If they say, their meaning is by a figure only to desire them to procure their requests of God: How dare any Christian trust his soul with that Church which teaches that which must needs be Idolatry in all that understand not the figure? So that upon the whole matter T. G. cannot produce any one Person of our Church that hath clearly and wholly acquitted the Church of Rome from the charge of Idolatry. It seems then our Church hath been made up of Puritans in T. G's sense of them. But if these do not satisfie him, what doth he think of the Arch-Bishops and Bishops and Clergy of the Convocation, A. D. 1640. Were all these Puritans too? And yet in the seventh Canon

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Canon *they have these words*, And albeit at the time of Reforming this Church from that gross Superstition of Popery, it was carefully provided that all means should be used to root out of the minds of the people, both the inclination thereto, and memory thereof; especially of the Idolatry committed in the Mass, for which cause all Popish Altars were demolished, &c. *What can more express the sense of our Church, than the concurrent opinion of Arch-Bishops, Bishops and Clergy of both Provinces met in Convocation? When we see they so lately, charged the Church of Rome with Idolatry.*

Let us now consider what exceptions he takes against the other witnesses produced by me. Jewel, Bilson, Davenant, all eminent Bishops of our Church, and of great learning, are cast away at once, as incompetent Persons. But why so? Why, saith T. G. they were all excepted

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cepted against by our late Sovereign King Charles the First in his third paper to Henderson. That is a shrewd prejudice indeed to their Authority to be rejected by a Prince of so excellent a judgement and so Cordial a friend to the Church of England. But it is good to be sure whether it be so or no. All that he saith of Bishop Jewel is this, and though I much reverence Bishop Jewel's memory, I never thought him infallible. So then, he must be Puritanically inclined; but whence does that follow? not surely from the Kings reverencing his memory, for that were to reflect upon the King himself; not from his not thinking him Infallible, for I dare say, the King never thought the Pope infallible; must he needs therefore think him a Puritan? Surely never man was such a Friend to the Puritans as this T. G. who without any ground gives them away some of the greatest honours of our Church, and (if the
Testis

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Testimony last cited be of any force to prove one a Puritan,) all mankind, and himself too : for I plainly perceive by this Preface that he is not infallible. Yet for all this, we will not let go Jewel, no nor Bilson, Davenant, White, Usher, Downam, what ever T. G. saith against them. Indeed King Charles excepts against Bilson for his Principles of Civil Government, but not a word of his disaffection to the Church of England : For Bishop Davenant, the King saith he is none of those to whom he appealed, or would submit unto, and with very good reason ; for the King had appealed to the practice of the primitive Church, and the Universal consent of Fathers ; therefore Bishop Davenant was a Puritan. It seems they have been all Puritans since the Primitive times ; and I hope the Church of Rome then hath good store of them, for that is far enough from the Fathers or the Primitive Church. But how comes

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comes Bishop White in for a Puritan, being so great a Friend of Arch-Bishop Laud; *why, forsooth*, Heylin reports that for licensing Bishop Montagu's Appello Cæsarem, it was said, that White was turned Black. And canst thou for thy heart, good Reader, expect a more pregnant proof? It was a notable saying, and it is great pity, the Historian did not preserve the memory of the Author of it; but by whom was it said? that must be supposed by the Puritans; and could none but they be the Authors of so witty a saying? But suppose they were the Puritans that said it? it is plain then, they thought him no sound Puritan, for they hold no falling from Grace. All then that can be inferred from this witty saying is, that White sunk in his esteem among them by this Act. And it is not possible for them to have an esteem for those who are not of their own Party? Concerning Arch-Bishop Usher, Dr. Heylin was known to be too much his enemy to be allowed to give a Character of him; and his name will

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not want a due Veneration as long as Learning and piety have any esteem among us.

But he is most troubled what to do with six that remain, viz. King James, Bishop Andrews, Arch-Bishop Laud, Isaac Casaubon, Doct. Field, and Doct. Jackson; these he could not for shame fasten the name of Puritans upon (as he doth with scorn on Bishop Downam, Reynolds, Whitaker, and Fulk; whose testimonies I said to prevent cavils, I need not to produce, although they are all capable of sufficient vindication.) For King James, he saith, that in the place cited by me he saith expressly, that what he condemns is adoring of Images, praying to them, and imagining a kind of Sanctity in them, all which are detested by Catholicks. Was ever man put to such miserable shifts? Are not these King James his words? But for worshipping either them, (Reliques) or Images, I must account it damnable

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nable Idolatry. *And doth not King James a little after take off their distinctions and evasions in these words, and they worship (forsooth) the Images of things in Being, and the Image of the true God. But Scripture forbiddeth to worship the Image of any thing that God created. Yea, the Image of God himself is not only expressly forbidden to be worshipped, but even to be made. Let them therefore that maintain this doctrine, answer it to Christ at the latter day, when he shall accuse them of Idolatry; And then I doubt if he will be paid with such nice Sophistical distinctions. Is all this nothing but to charge them with such practices which they detest? Doth he not mention their Doctrine, and their distinctions? Did not King James understand what he said, and what they did? It is plain he charges them with Idolatry in what they did,*

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did, which was that I brought his Testimony for. The like answer he gives to the rest of them, viz. that they charged them, with what they thought they did, but the Papists deny that they do any such thing: i. e. in plain Terms, they charge them with Idolatry, but the Papists deny they commit it. And so they do when I charge them with it; so that T. G. by the very same reason might have acquitted me from charging them with it, and have spared his Book. Is not this now an Admirable way of proving, that they do not charge them with Idolatry, because the Papists deny they commit it? Who meddles with what they profess they do, or do not? I was to shew what these Persons charged them with. And do any of these excuse them by saying any doctrine of theirs was contrary to these particulars? do they not expressly set themselves to disprove their distinctions upon which their doctrine is founded? and shew the vanity of them because their
open

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open and allowed practices do plainly contradict them; and shew that they do give divine honour to Images, however in words they deny it. But this way of defending them is, as if those whom St. Paul charges that they professed that they knew God, but in works they denied him, should reply to him, how can we deny him in our Works, since we profess him in our Words? Just so saith T. G. how can they be charged with Idolatry, since they profess to do no such thing? As though such persons, as those I mentioned, did not understand both what the Papists said for themselves and what they did notwithstanding. And now I joyn with T. G. in desiring the Reader may be judge between us, whether I have betrayed my trust in pretending to defend the Church of England; and whether in charging the Church of Rome with Idolatry, I have contradicted the sense of it? since I have made it appear, that her most true
and

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and Genuin sons, the most remote from all suspicion of disaffection to her, or inclination to Puritanism, have concurred in the same charge which I undertook to make good.

But there is one blow yet remaining in this Preface, which I must endeavour to ward off, otherwise it will be a terrible one to the Church of England; for by this charge of Idolatry, he makes me to subvert the very foundation of Ecclesiastical Authority in it. This it is to charge home. For, saith he, it being a received Maxime and not being denyable by any man of common sense, that no man can give to another that which he hath not himself, it lyes open to the Conscience of every man, that if the Church of Rome be guilty of Heresie, much more if guilty of Idolatry, it falls under the Apostles excommunication, (Gal. 1. 8.) and so remains deprived of the Lawful Authority

(e)

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thority to use and exercise the power of Orders ; and consequently the Authority of Governing, preaching and Administring the Sacraments, which those of the Church of England challenge to themselves, as deriv'd from the Church of Rome, can be no true and lawful Jurisdiction, but usurped and Anti-Christian. And so farewell to the Church of England, if the Church of Rome were not more kind in this case than T. G. is. Hitherto we have seen his skill in the affairs of our Church, and now we shall see just as much in the Doctrine of his own. For doth not the Council of Trent make Orders a Sacrament? and one of those which doth imprint an indelible character? and doth not that Council pronounce an Anathema against those, that denyed the validity of the Sacrament administred by one in mortal sin, in case he observes the essentials of it? How then can T. G. escape excommuni-

*Concil. Tri-
dent. sess. 7.
can. 9. sess.
23. can. 4.*

cation

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edication from his own Church, that denies the validity of the Sacrament of Orders in case of the sin of the Givers of it? If the validity of the Sacrament doth not depend on the worth or quality of the Ministers of it but upon the essentials and the institution of Christ, how can the fault of the persons hinder the conveyance of that Authority, which they are only the bare instruments to convey? Doth T. G. think so in all other Sacraments? as in case of Baptism; that supposing the Ministers of it have been guilty of Heresie or Idolatry, the Sacrament loses its effect? Well fare then the Donatists, whose opinion this was, and in whom it hath been condemned by the Church. If it be not so in other Sacraments how comes it to be thus in Orders? which he must acknowledge, to be as much a Sacrament as Baptism; or else he must renounce the Council of Trent. And it is observable, that the very argument used by the Donatists and others, was the same which T. G. here produces; viz. his common maxim

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Vasquez.
in 3. p.
Thom. disp.
137. c. 3.
n. 20.

of Reason, and not denyable by any man of common sense that no man can give to another, that which he hath not himself; to which this answer was given, that the Instrument was not the giver, but the first Institutor, and in case the Minister keep to the Institution, the Grace of the Sacrament may be conveyed by him though he hath it not himself.

Vasquez. in
3. p. Th.
disp. 243.
c. 1.

But, methinks, if T. G. had forgotten the Doctrine of the Council of Trent, he might have looked into some one or other of their own Authors to have informed himself better of their Doctrine in this matter. Vasquez hath a Chapter on purpose to prove, that an Heretical, excommunicated, suspended Bishop is a sufficient Minister of Ordination; and saith, that all the Schoolmen and Summits are agreed in it, and that there can be no doubt at all made of it. And did none of these men understand the principle that is undenyable by any man of common sense? What a back-blow is this to those of his

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his own Church? for Vasquez saith this is determined as a matter of faith among them, that the validity of a Sacrament doth not depend on the probity or faith of the Minister. And he denies it to be in the power of the Church to hinder the effect of ordination in an excommunicated Bishop, because it cannot blot out his Character, or take away his power. Estius saith, that no Crime how great soever, whether Heresie, Schism, or Apostasie, no censure how heavy soever, as excommunication, can hinder the validity of ordination by a Bishop, although it be of those who are not subject to his jurisdiction, in case he observes the lawful rites of ordination as to the essence of the Sacrament; for this reason, because ordination belongs to the power of Order, which being once received can never be lost; but those things which belong to Jurisdiction, as ab-

*Est in Sen-
tent. l. 4.
dist. 25.
sect. 3.*

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Aug. l. 2.
E. Epist.
Pa men. c.
13. 17. c.
Donat. l. 1.
c. 1 l. 3.
c. 10.

Aug. Epist.
50 Epist.
162. c.
Crisp. l. 2.
c. 11, 12.
Codex Can.
Eccles.
Afric. c. 68.
Apud Bal-
samon. Et
Zonar. p. 71.
Halli v de
ordin. sa-
cris p. 2.
Sect. 4 c. 5.
f. i. n. 4.

olution and excommunication have no effect, where that Jurisdiction is taken away. And this Doctrine they all ground upon St. Augustin's discourse against the Donatists; and upon the practice of the Church at that time which did receive those who were ordained among the Donatists, without scrupling their Orders; as not only appears by the testimony of St. Augustin but by the decree of an African Council to that purpose; and that not only at first, but when the Schism was grown inveterate. And yet Francis Hallier a late Doctor of the Sorbon, tells us, that the Donatists were not barely Schismatics, but they were adjudged Hereticks, for asserting that the efficacy of Sacraments did depend upon the quality of the persons, and not upon the merits of Christ. The same Author vehemently disputes against those, who assert that the power of Order can be lost by the sin of the person, and

shews

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*shews that Doctrine hath been condemned
 by several Councils before that of Trent;
 as of Arles, of Orleans and Constance:
 and undertakes to answer all the instances* *P. 2. sect.
3. c. 2. sect.
5, 6, 7.*
*brought from Antiquity to the contrary; as
 either understood of such Hereticks, which
 did not retain the essentials of the Sacra-* *Sect. 4. c. 5.
sect. 1.*
*ment, or only implying the fault committed in
 giving or receiving them at the hands of
 such persons, but not any invalidity in the
 Sacrament it self. And afterwards he
 proves that Hereticks are capable of
 Ordination. But if these, and many others
 of their later Writers will not satisfy him, I
 desire him to consult their more antient Au-*
thors, Thom. Aquinas determins that *Th. Aquin.
suppl. q. 38.
art. 2.*
*Hereticks and those who are cut
 off from the Church, may give Or-*
ders as well as administer other Sa-
craments, the reason he gives is, that
a power in Consecration is given to
a Bishop, which can never be taken
from him, although he will not allow
it to be called a Character. For several,

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especially of the ancient Schoolmen would not have consecration to imprint a new Character ; but they were never able to give an intelligible account of what they meant by the Character as distinct from that Sacramental power which was conveyed by consecration and they granted to be indelible as the other was, some making it an extension of the Character of Priesthood, others a bare extrinsecal denomination added to it ; but however they held it such as could no more be taken away than the Character of Priesthood. Cardinal Bonaventure saith, that the validity of Sacraments among Heretics, was a Question much in dispute among the ancient Doctors, but that it hath been determined by St. Augustin, that they are valid if they preserve the essentials of them : and in the matter of ordination he saith, that the power of Orders, although it be not a distinct Character, yet because it is built upon, it can no more be

Bonav.
sent. l. 4.
dist. 25. q. 2.

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be taken away than the Character
itself: but whatever is founded upon
Jurisdiction as the power of excom-
munication and absolution may be
taken away. But I need not mention
any more particular Writers, since Mori-
nus acknowledges, that for 400. years
the opinion of the validity of Orders
conferred by Hereticks, hath only
obtained in the Roman Church.

*Morin. de
Sacris
Ordinat.
par. 3. Ex-
ercit. 5.
C. 1. n. 12.*

Before that time, he proves at large that it
was more disputable, as appears by the
Master of the Sentences, who accounts
it a perplexed and almost insoluble
difficulty, because of the different opi-
nions of Doctors about it; but after-
wards St. Augustin's opinion was
generally received both among the School-
men and Canonists; and is now become
a matter of faith in the Roman Church, at
least by consequence, since the Decrees of
Councils. And although Morinus will not
allow that any decree of their Church
hath passed in this matter, yet he saith,
there

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*Extr. 5.
c. 8. n. 7.*

there hath been so long and so universal a consent of Doctors in this point, that it ought to be instead of a Law, which they ought not to violate. By this we may judge of the learning and skill of T. G. in the Doctrine of his own Church.

But if he would not look into the Controversal Writers of their Church, yet if he had but searched into the practice of the Church either in antient or modern times, he would have been ashamed to have made use of such an Argument to overthrow all Ecclesiastical Authority among us. I grant that in some tumultuous Ages of the Church, Ordinations have been adjudged null through the defaults of the Persons, but then it was meerly for breaking the Canons of the Church; so it was in the case of Formosus, for breaking the Canons against the Translations of Bishops; in the case of Ebbo Arch-Bishop of Rhemes, whose Ordinations were nulled by Hincmarus and the Council of Soissons, for not being

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being Canonically restored after deposition but upon appeal to the Pope they were pronounced valid : in the Case of Pope Constantine for precipitating Orders to secure the Popedom ; in the famous case of Photius , whose ordination was declared Null by the opposite faction on the same grounds ; but all these things were done in troublesome times , when one party sought a pretence against the other. But if we regard the more general practice of the Church , we shall find when far greater objections than these were made , yet Ordinations have been allowed ; although made by Hereticks. I shall offer him the fairest terms he can desire , and for the practice of the Church referr him to his own dear second Council of Nice , and the modern practice of the Roman Church. The Question of the Validity of Ordination by Hereticks was at large debated in the first action of the second Council of Nice , upon the submission of Basilus , Theodorus , and Theodosius , Hypatius and others

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others who had been Bishops of the opposite party, which John the Vicar of the Orient there declared to be worse than any former heresie : upon which the Question was proposed, whether upon renouncing their heresie they might be received as Bishops, and the Orders be allowed of those who were ordained by them during their Heresie ? Hypatius appealed to the custom of the Church ; then the Canons of Councils and writings of the Fathers were brought into Council : Tarasius produced the Canon of the Council of Nice, allowing the Ordinations of the Cathari, and the imposition of hands there mentioned he understands only for benediction, and not for ordination : and the Council of Ephesus making no distinction between those ordained by Nestorians and others ; (for therein the force of that third Canon must lye which Tarasius thought so plain) from St. Basil, allowing those Bishops which communicated with Ifoes or Zoius
and

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and Saturninus; from the Council of Ephesus allowing the Orders of the Messaliani or Euchitæ; from the Council of Chalcedon, allowing the Bishops upon their repentance, which had joyned with Dioscorus: and more particularly, for those which had been ordained by Heretical Bishops, it was there shewed, that Anatolius the President of the fourth Council was ordained by Dioscorus in the presence of Eutyches; that John Bishop of Hierusalem after he had renounced the Acephalists by whom he was ordained, was received and submitted to as Bishop by the Orthodox; that many of those who sat in the sixth Council were ordained by Sergius, Pyrrhus, Paulus, and Petrus, who were in that Council declared to be Hereticks; and for fifty years together Tarasius saith, they had no other Ordinations: upon these evidences of the practice of the Church, this Council of Nice declared likewise, that the Ordination

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nation of Heretical Bishops was valid.

For the modern practice of the Church of Rome, I appeal to the allowance therein given to the Ordinations of the Greek Church, although the Greek Church be charged with Heresie; and that ever since the notorious Schism in the time of Michael Cerularius A. D. 1053. In the time of Innocent the third some Greek Clergy-men living in the Dioceses of Latin Bishops, yet received Ordination from Greek Bishops, which made the Latin Bishops suspend them from the execution of their Office, the Pope, hearing of it, sends to his Legat, wherein he consents to the suspension in case it were done without leave from the Latin Bishop; but if leave were obtained, he takes off the suspension; because this custom is allowed in the Church. I need not produce more particular instances in this kind, which may be seen at large in Morinus; because in all the attempts of

Errav. de
temp. Ordin.
c. 1004
T. a. 11.
Morin. de
sacris ordi-
nat. part. 1.
c. 33. 4. 5.

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of reconciliation in the several Councils held to that purpose, as at Lyons, and Florence, where all the matters in difference were most fully handled, there was never any objection made to the Greek Ordinations. But most remarkable to this purpose is the Bull of Clement the seventh containing in it a former Bull of Leo the tenth, published by Leo Allatius, by Isaacius Habertus, and by Morinus, wherein their Ordinations and other rites and customs are expressly allowed. And to this day saith Morinus they are allowed in Rome, not only to perform other parts of divine service according to their customs in the Church of St. Athanasius, but to ordain Priests after their own manner; for which they had a Bull of Urban the eighth.

Leo Allatius de e.
tat: Et interst. in
collat: Ordina. p. 5. 14.
Isaac. Habert. Pontifical.
Grac. in pref.
Morin. de Sacris Ordin. p. 1. c. 4.

And now I desire T. G. to consider a little his undeniable maxim, that no man can give to another that which he hath not himself, whether he doth in earnest think that his own Church

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Church is so bereft of all common sense, as not to understand the force of this Maxim? and if it thought it of any weight in this matter, how it could ever approve the Ordinations of Hereticks, or decree that the Sacraments retain their efficacy, where the essentials of them are observed, whatever the faith or manners of the Instruments be?

And this was all I intended in this Preface; of the rest of his Book, the Reader may expect an account as God gives health and opportunity.

The

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When I Published the late *Book*, p. 1.
 which hath so much enraged Of the
 those of the *Church of Rome* Nature of
 against me, I thought I had these An-
 reason to expect that a just swers.
 Answer should be made to it; but they have
 taken an effectual course to undeceive me; for
 By this *new way* I perceive, their utmost
 ambition is to have something abroad
 which among themselves may pass for an
Answer. Which put me in mind of what
 I have heard a great Person said, when he
 had undertaken to manage an ill cause before
 a publick Audience, and one of his Friends
 asked him what he meant by it, *Trouble not*
your self, said he, *our own side will be sure*
to believe me. It was surely some such pre-
 sumption as this, which made the learned
 Authors of these two elaborate *Pamphlets*

to appear in such a manner in Print, as if it were no great matter what they said, so their people might have this to say, and (if they can) believe it too, ~~that my Book is answered~~. If this be all their care will afford, it deserves rather to be praised than censured; if it will bear more, they are as bad managers of it as their enemies could wish. For however I was threatned before-hand that such answers were coming abroad, *every line of which would fetch blood*; yet, as cruel as they are when we are under their lash, I found that which they designed for my punishment to give me no small pleasure: and I never had so good an opinion of the mercifulness of their Church as when I saw with what feeble hands they chastised me. I had heard so much of their rage, that I expected their greatest strength would be employed upon me; and I could not tell what *Zamzummins* they might hitherto keep in the dark, whose arms were not to be made use of, but upon some special occasion when an Adversary was to be dispatch'd all at once and so perfectly subdued as never to appear more. While I was preparing my self for this kind of Martyrdom, out come these mighty men of valour, who have beaten nothing that I know of, but the air and themselves; for they have neither *tied my tongue*, nor *broke my heart*, nor *fetch'd*

one drop of blood that I can yet find; all which were things I was told would be done, when these answers came abroad; which threatnings made so loud a noise, that I heard the report of them not only nearer home, but from very distant persons and places.

But lest I should be thought only to despise my Adversaries (which I confess they have given me no small occasion to do) I shall bestow a particular examination upon what they have offered by way of Answer to my Book. Only I think it reasonable in the first place to take notice of their present way and method of Answering, wherein they make use of as many artifices, as they do in gaining Profelytes. When we set our selves to Answer their Books, we endeavour to state the Controversie plainly, to examine their proofs, to apply distinct Answers to their Arguments fairly represented in their own words, and to render the whole Discourse as clear and perspicuous as may be, that all persons may be capable of judging on which side the greatest strength and evidence lyes. This is the mighty advantage which a good cause gives us; we make use of no tricks to deceive men, nor Sophistical cavils to confound and perplex things; we dare appeal to the judgement of any impartial person, who will take the pains to examine the mat-

§. 2.
Of their
common
way of
Answering
our Books.

ters in difference between us. But in their late dealings with us, they seek to avoid the main things in dispute, and abhor any methodical proceeding; one man picks out a sentence here and there to answer, another a Page, or two together, a third leaps from one thing to another, as if resolv'd to pass by the greatest difficulties; but he is a man of courage indeed, that dares fall upon the reer, and begin to confute a Book at the end of it, so that if he lives long enough, and get heart, he may in time come to the beginning: And if we observe them all, they look for nothing so much as some cleanly way of escape, and if they can but raise such a dust as to fly away without being openly discerned to do so, this they hope those of their own side will be so kind and partial as to call a Victory. These are no general accusations, but such as are easie to observe in their dealings with me as to my former Book, and that lately published. But to judicious men, all these little arts and shifts are either plain acknowledgements of a baffled Cause, or an Argument of a weak and unskilful management.

§. 3.
Of their
Calumnies
against me.

If the Book it self be a little too troublesome to be medled with, it is best to fall upon the Author, and it is a hard case if by false and ridiculous stories, or open calumnies,

nies, or at least base and ugly insinuations,
 they cannot diminish his reputation; and
 then they hope the Book will sink with its
 Author. But *we are not Ignorant* whose
 cause is wont to be managed by such *devices*
 as these are, and from whom they have learnt
 this method of confuting Adversaries. As
 for all their *railing accusations* against me;
 I shall not so much as desire God to *rebuke*
them, but only pray that he would pardon
 them; and if I must thank them for any
 thing, it is for giving me the occasion for ex-
 ercising so great a charity. I have learnt of
 him *who when he was reviled, reviled not*
again, not only to forbear reproaching them in
 the same manner, but to return them *good for*
evil, and to pray for them while they calum-
 niate me. I have so much the less reason to
 wonder that my Book should be charged by
 them with no less than *Blasphemy*, since the Mat. 26. 65.
 Author of our Religion himself was so, and
 suffered under that accusation. But wherein
 I pray doth this *blasphemy* lye? have I uttered
 any thing that tends to the reproach of *God*
 or true *Religion*? have I the least word which
 malice it self can stretch to the dishonour of
Jesus Christ, the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, or the
Holy Scriptures written by divine Inspiration?
 no; I challenge the boldest of them, and most
 malicious, to produce any thing I ever said

or writ that doth but seem to look that way. Have I made the practice of true devotion ridiculous, and the real expressions of piety the subject of scorn and derision? No, so far from it, that it was only a just zeal for the Honour and practice of true Religion made me willing to lay open the ridiculous *Fanaticisms* of some pretended *Saints* in the *Roman Church*. And must they be allowed to charge *Fanaticism* on us, and think it far from *Blasphemy* to represent the *Enthusiastick* Follies of the *Sectaries* among us; and when they are guilty of the very same, or greater, may not we shew their injustice and partiality, without being accused of *Blasphemy*? But some of these are *Canonized Saints*, as *S. Brigitt*, *S. Catharine*, *S. Francis*, and *S. Ignatius*; which is so far from making the Cause of their Church better, that to my understanding it makes it much worse. For although *Fanaticism* be disowned by our Church, it seems it is not barely countenanced and allowed in the Church of *Rome*, but *Canonized* and *adored*. That which I insist upon, is this; either we have no *Fanaticks*, or theirs are so; for by the very same rule that ours are so, theirs must be too; for our *Fanaticks* do pretend as high to the *Spirit* and *divine Revelation* as any of theirs; only there is this remarkable difference between

between their *Fanaticks* and ours, that ours are among us but not of us, but theirs are both. Now if any one who pretends to *Inspiration* and *Euthusiasm* cannot be charged with *Fanaticism* without *blasphemy*, we must be exposed to all follies and contradictions imaginable; and to what purpose are we bid to try the *Spirits whether they be of God or no*, i. e. whether their pretence to divine revelation be true or false? If there may be false pretences to *Inspiration*, we are to examine the grounds of them, and to judge accordingly; and all false pretenders to *Inspiration*, let them be *Canonized* by whom they will, are the highest sort of *Fanaticks*; and the greater honour is given them, the greater dishonour it is to the *Christian Religion*. 1 Joh. 4. r.

But these things shall be more largely discussed in their proper place; I now only take notice of the injustice of their calumny with which they have made so much noise among injudicious people: and I should not have been so much concerned about it, had I not found suggestions to the same purpose in the Authors of the two Pamphlets. The one of them very kindly makes no difference between *Lucian*, *Porphyrius* and me, but only some interest which doth byass me another way; and verily believes, good man, that were it not for that, I could flurt with as much piquancy and

§. 4.

Exposing
Fana-icism
no differ-
vice to
Christia-
nity.

Dr. Stil-
lingfleet
against
Dr. Stil-
lingfleet.
p. 11.

and railery at *Christian Religion*, as I do at the Roman. In which base suggestion there is no colour of truth, but only that he very honestly distinguisheth the *Christian Religion* and the *Roman* from each other; as indeed they are in many things as different from each other as truth from falshood, wisdom from folly, and true piety from gross Superstition. If he had called me an *Atheist* in plain terms, the grossness of the calumny might have abated the force of it; but there is no such way to do a man mischief, as by sly insinuations and shrewd suggestions introduced with *I verily believe*, and exprest with some gravity and zeal. But you who are so good at resolving faith, what is this *verily believe* of yours founded upon? Have you the authority of your *Church* for it? have you any evidence of reason? or rather, have you it by some *vision* or *revelation* made by some of those *Saints*, whose *Fanaticism* is exposed? or do you *verily believe it*, as you *verily believe* many other things, for no reason in the world? If I should tell you I have made it my business to assert the truth of the *Scriptures*, and *Christian Religion* therein contained, in a large Discourse several years since published; such is your charity, that you would tell me, so did *Vaninus* write for *Providence*, when he denyed a *Deity*. If I should make large *Apologies* for

for my innocency, and publish a confession of my faith, with protestations that no *interest* in the world could remove me from it; you might tell me, where there is no guilt what need so much ado? In plain terms, I know but one way to satisfy such as you are, but I will keep from it as long as I can, and that is to go to *Rome* and be burnt for my faith; for that is the kindness there shewed to those who contend for the purity of the *Christian Religion* against the corruptions of the *Roman*. But such calumnies as these, as they are not fit to be passed by, so are they too gross to need any further answer. I shall however declare my mind freely to you; if I had no other notion of the Christian Doctrine, than what I have from the Doctrines of your Church as contrary to ours; no other measures of *Christian* piety than from your mystical *Theology*; no better way to worship *God* than what is practised among you; no greater certainty of *Inspiration* from *God* than of the *Visions* and *Revelations* of your late *Saints*; no other *miracles* to confirm the *Christian* Doctrine than what are wrought by your *Images* and *Saints*, I should sooner choose to be a *Philosopher*, than a *Christian* upon those terms. And I verily believe (to answer yours with another) that the frauds and impostures of the *Ro-*

Melch. Can.
loc. Theol.
l. 11. p. 534.
Lud. Viv.
de trad.
discipl. l. 5.

Dr. Stil-
lin's
Princip.
confid.
Preface.

man Church have made more *Atheists* in *Christendom*, than any one cause whatsoever besides: for when men resolve all their faith into the testimony of a *Church* whose frauds are so manifest, and confessed by your best Writers, such as *Melchior Canus*, and *Ludov. Vives*; what can they who know no better, but suspect the *Inspirations* and *Miracles* of former Ages, who see such false pretences to them so much magnified, and the *Fanatick* pretenders *Canonized* on that account? And I am so far from thinking it any disservice to the *Christian Religion* to expose these *Fanaticisms*, that I again verily believe that *Christianity* will never obtain as it ought to do among men, till all those hypocritical cheats be yet more laid open to the view of the *World*; which if any one have but the courage and patience to undertake, it would be as great, and a much more useful labour than the cleansing of the *Anglean Stable*. This is not to make sport and recreation for the *Atheist* and debauched, nor to give occasion to such persons to turn the *Inspirations* of *Holy Scripture* into matter of *Drollery* and *Buffoonry*, as the Author of the *second Pamphlet* tragically declaims; any more than our *Saviours* unmasking the hypocrisy of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* was the destroying the *Law* of *Moses*; or the discovery

discovery of cheats and impostors doth give occasions to suspect the honesty of all mankind: Nay so far is it from that, that we think the separating of *Fanaticism* from true inspiration to be one of the best Services that can be done to the *Christian Religion*, which otherwise is in danger of being despised or rejected by the considerate part of mankind. But I would fain know of these men, whether they do in earnest make no difference between the Writings of such as Mother *Juliana* and the Books of *Scripture*; between the Revelations of St. *Brigitt*, St. *Catherine*, &c. and those of the *Prophets*; between the actions of St. *Francis* and *Ignatius Loyola* and those of the *Apostles*? if they do not, I know who they are that expose our *Religion* to purpose; if they do make a difference, how can the representing their visions and practices reflect dishonour upon the other, so infinitely above them, so much more certainly conveyed down to us with the consent of the whole Christian World? Thus much may here suffice to represent the arts our *Adversaries* are driven to, to defend themselves; I cannot blame them that they would engage *Religion* on their side, but so have all *Fanaticks* in the World as well as they; and I cannot for my heart see, but this heavy charge

charge of *Blasphemy* and undermining Religion does as justly lye on them, who deride the *Fanaticks* among us, as on those who have discovered the *Fanaticism* of the Church of Rome.



AN
EXAMINATION
OF THE
PAMPHLET,

Entituled,

Dr. Stillingfleet against Dr. Stillingfleet.

HAVING thus far laid open their present way of dealing with their *Adversaries*, I now come to a particular consideration of these two *Pamphlets*; and begin with that called *Dr. Stillingfleet against Dr. Stillingfleet*, &c. The Author of which is to be commended for so noble an enterprise (which few of the *Champions* of former Ages could accomplish) viz. to make his Adversary fall by his own sword. But the mischief of it is, these *Romantick Knights* do hurt no where but in Paper and their

§. 1.
The insufficiency of his way of Answering.

P. 14.

their own imagination. But I forget his grave admonition, *that I would treat these matters seriously, and lay aside drollery.* To be then as grave as he can desire, there are these two things which I design to prove against him. 1. That on supposition I did contradict my self, in the way he insists upon it, that were no sufficient answer to my Book. 2. That I am far enough from contradicting my self in any one of the things which he insists upon.

1. Supposing what he contends for were true, yet my Book remains unanswered; the design of which was to shew that no man can joyn in the Communion of the *Roman Church* without great hazard of his salvation. If I had any where said the contrary, this indeed would have made it evident that I had contradicted my self. But what then? doth the force of all the arguments used by me in this last Discourse fall to the ground, because I was formerly of another opinion? Let me ask these revolvers from the *Church of England* one question; whether they do not now more plainly contradict themselves as to their former opinions, than they can pretend that I have ever done? I desire to know, whether this makes all their present arguments for the *Roman Church* of no force? If they think their present reasons ought to be answered, what-

whatever contrary opinion they had before; why, on supposition I had contradicted in a former Book what I say in this, must this render all that I have said, or can hereafter say in this matter, invalid? Doth the strength of all lye upon my bare affirming or denying? was it ever *true* because I said it? if not, how comes it to be *untrue* now, because I deny it? I do not remember I was ever so vain, to make use of my own authority to prove a thing to be true, because I believed it; and if I had, the world is not so vain to believe a man one jot the sooner for it. If my authority in saying or denying be of no importance to the truth of the thing, then he may prove that I contradict myself, and yet all the arguments of my Book be as strong as ever. I do not desire any one to follow my opinion because it is mine, but I offer reason and authority for the proof of what I say; if those be good in themselves, they do not therefore cease to be so, because they are, or seem to be inconsistent with what I have said elsewhere. So that self-contradiction being proved, overthrows not the reason of the thing, but the authority of the person; and where things depend meerly upon authority, it is a good argument, and no where else. If a *witness* in a *Court* contradicts himself, his testimony signifies nothing; because there is nothing else but his authority that makes his

B

testimony

testimony valid; but if a *Lawyer* at the Bar chance to speak inconsistently, if afterwards he speaks plain and evident reason, does that take off the force of it, because he said something before which contradicted that plain reason? If the *Pope*, or those who pretend to be infallible, contradict themselves, that sufficiently overthrows their pretence of infallibility; for he that changeth his mind, must be deceived once; but for us fallible mortals, if we once hit upon reason and truth, and manage the evidence of it clearly, that reason doth not lose its former evidence, because the same persons may afterwards oppose it. Suppose I should be able to prove that *Bellarmino* in his *Recognitions* contradicts what he had said in his former Books; doth this presently make all his arguments useless, and him incapable of ever appearing in controversy more? Doth this make all his authorities false, and his reasons unconcluding? doth it hence follow, that he spake no where consistently, because once or twice, or perhaps as often as his neighbours, he contradicted himself? But my grave *Adversary*, *J. W.* imagines that we Writers of Controversies are like *witnesses* in *Chancery*, and are bound to make *Affidavits* before the *Masters* of this *Court of Controversie*; and that whatever we say is to be taken as upon our oath; this indeed would be an excellent way of bringing Con-
troversies

controversies to an issue, if we were to be sworn
 whether such a thing as *Transubstantiation*
 were true or false; and I cannot tell whether
 this, or laying wagers, or the *Popes* infallibility
 be the best way to end such Controversies; for
 any one of them would do it, if people could
 but agree about it. But now my *Adversary*
 says, that if a man once contradict himself he is
 to be looked on as a *perjured person*, and
 whatever he saith, his word is not to be taken.
 This he not only begins with, but very tri-
 umphantly concludes with it in these words,
 and this alone may suffice to annul whatever
 he has hitherto; or shall hereafter object
 against us; for a witness, who has been once
 palpably convinced to have forsworn or con-
 tradicted himself in matters of moment, be-
 sides the condign punishment he is lyable unto,
 he does vacate all evidences produced by him,
 against his *Adversary*, and deserves never
 more to be heard against him in any Tribunal.
 I see now what it is they would be at, no less
 than perpetual silence, and being set in the
 Pillory with that Pamphlet on my forehead
Dr. Still. against Dr. Still. for being guilty
 of contradicting my self, would satisfy *J. W.*
 and his Friends; This I suppose was the
 meaning of stopping my mouth for ever, when
 this Answer was to come out. But now I
 perceive it is so dangerous a thing, I had best

St. against
 St. P. 14.

stand upon my defence, and utterly deny that I have contradicted my self in any thing, in which *J. W.* hath charged me.

§. 2.

2. To make it then out that this is a groundless charge, I must go through the several particulars insisted on.

No contradiction about the charge of Idolatry.

The first is in the charge of Idolatry; but how do I contradict my self about this? Had I vindicated the Church of Rome from Idolatry in my *Defence of Arch-bishop Laud*, this had been indeed to contradict my self: but this is not so much as pretended; and if it were, no thing could be more easily confuted; for in that very Book, as it falls out very happily there is a discourse to the same purpose proving the Church of Rome guilty of Idolatry, in *Invocation of Saints*. and the worship of Images, and that the Heathen, in the worship of inferiour Deities and Images might be excused on the same grounds that those of the Church of Rome do excuse themselves. Here is then no appearance of a contradiction in terms; and it is only pretended to be by consequence, viz. from yielding that the Church of Rome and we do not differ in Fundamental points, and that the Church of Rome is therefore a true Church; from whence he inferrs, that it cannot be guilty of Idolatry because to teach that, would be a Fundamental error, and inconsistent with the Being

Rational Account, p. 596, 606.

a true Church: and therefore to charge the Church of Rome with Idolatry, and to allow it to be a true Church is a contradiction.

This is the substance of what he saith upon this head: to which I shall answer by shewing, 1. That this way of answering is very disingenuous. 2. That it is Sophistical, and proves not the thing which he intends.

1. That it is a disingenuous way; because he barely opposes a judgement of charity concerning their Church, to a judgement of reason concerning the nature of actions, without at all examining the force of those reasons which are produced in the Book he pretends to answer. Can J. W. imagine, that any one who enquires into the safest way for his salvation, and hears the Church of Rome charged with Idolatry in her worship, by arguments drawn from the plain Law of God, the common sense of mankind, the repugnancy of their way of worship to the conceptions we ought to have of the divine nature, the consent of the ancient Christian Church, the parity of the case in many respects with the Heathen Idolaters, should presently conclude, that all these arguments are of no force, meerly because the person who made use of them, had upon another occasion judged so charitably of that Church, as to suppose it still to retain the essentials of a true Church? I will put a case

parallel to this ; suppose one of the *Church* of *Judah* should have called the *Church* of *Israel* in the time of *Jeroboam* a *true Church*, because they acknowledged the true *God*, and did believe an agreement in that common acknowledgement to be sufficient to preserve the *essentials* of a *Church* among them ; and afterwards the same person should go about to convince the *ten Tribes* of their *Idolatry* in worshipping *God*, by the *Calves* of *Dan* and *Bethel* : would this be thought a sufficient way of answering him, to say, that he contradicted himself, by granting them a *true Church*, and yet charging them with *Idolatry* ? whereas the only true consequence would be, that he thought some kind of *Idolatry* consistent with the Being of a *Church*. Might not such a person justly say, that they made a very ill use of his *charity*, when he supposed only that kind of *Idolatry* which implies more *Gods* than one, to *unchurch* a people ? But however, those persons were more concerned to vindicate themselves from *Idolatry* of any kind, than he was to defend his charitable opinion of them ; and if they could prove to him, that this inferior sort of *Idolatry* does *unchurch* them as well as the grosser, the consequence of it would be, that his *charity* must be so much the less, but their danger would be the same. This is just our case with the *Church* of

Rome ;

Rome ; we acknowledge that they still retain the Fundamental articles of the *Christian* faith, that there is no dispute between them and us about the true *God* and his Son *Jesus Christ*, as to his death, resurrection, glory, and being the proper object of divine worship ; we yield that they have true *Baptism* among them, in the name of the *Father* , *Son* , and *Holy Ghost* ; and we looking upon these as the *essentials* of a *true Church*, do upon that account own that *Church* to be so : but then we charge the *Roman Church*, with gross corrupting that Worship which is proper to the divine nature, by her *worship of Images*, *adoration of the Host*, and *Invocation of Saints* ; which being done, not in expresse terms against the worship of the true *God*, but by consequence, we do not think this doth destroy the *Being* of a *Church* among them ; although it makes the salvation of persons in her communion extremely hazardous : and after we have gone about to prove this by many and weighty arguments, is it reasonable for any one to tell us that we contradict our selves, and therefore our arguments do signifie nothing : whereas in truth, here is no appearance of a contradiction to that which is our own sense in this matter. For what shadow of a contradiction is it, to say, that the *Roman Church* is a *true Church*, and yet is guilty of *Idolatry* ;

supposing that we believe some sort of *Idolatry*
 which is very sinful, not to be yet of so high
 a nature as to *unchurch* those who practise it;
 And we choose the Instance of the *ten Tribes*
 for the ground of this charity. If they can
 prove that all sorts of *Idolatry* do necessarily
 destroy the *essentials* of a *Church*, the conse-
 quence is, we must have less charity for them,
 than we had before ; And such a concession
 from us doth not shew their guilt to be less, but
 only our charity to be greater. Suppose a man
 should exceed in his charity towards a person
 guilty of some grievous faults, and say, he
 believes he may be a pious man for all this;
 but withal severely reproves him for his faults,
 and tells him the danger he continually runs
 by such actions; would it be fair for such a
 man to answer him, that his reproofs were not
 to be regarded, because he contradicted him-
 self, for he told him he believed him to be a
 pious man, and yet upbraided him with those
 faults which were inconsistent with piety ?
 what would the consequence of this be to the
 thing it self ? would this make those faults
 ever the less, because he judged so charitably
 of the person notwithstanding his commit-
 ting them ? But when we allow the *Church of*
Rome to be a *true Church*, we are far from
 understanding by that a *sound* or a *good*
Church free from corruptions, which would be
 the

the most proper sense to found a contradiction upon, in this matter of *Idolatry*; but we mean no more by it, than as a man is a *true man*, though he hath the *plague* upon him; those which we account the *essentials* of a *Church*, we deny not to it, but withal, we contend that it is over-run with such corruptions in worship, as do mightily endanger the salvation of those who live in the communion of it.

2. Having thus discovered the *disingenuity* of making so bad a use of our *charity* against us, I now come to shew how *Sophistical* this way of answering is, by a closer examination of it.

§. 2.
The Sophistical
cavils in
this argu-
ment.

First, The starting of a new objection answers no argument, and all that this amounts to is only raising a new difficulty; whereas he ought in the first place to have answered all the arguments I had brought to prove them guilty of *Idolatry*; and when he had done this fairly and plainly (which for some good reasons he had no mind to do) he might then have insisted on the inconsistency of it with principles owned by me; but to do this without giving an answer, so much as to any one argument, is a clear evidence of a sophistical and cavilling humour, rather than of any intention to satisfy an inquisitive mind.

2. The force of this objection lyes in the different sense and meaning of several expressions

ons made use of by him, which being explained, the objection will signifie nothing. For if we rightly understand the notion of Idolatry, the manner of teaching it, the sense of Fundamental errors and a true Church, as it is owned by me, the very appearance of any contradiction vanisheth.

I agree in the general, that *the true notion of Idolatry is, giving the honour due only to God to a meer creature*; and I desire no greater advantage against the Church of Rome, than from such a concession; but then we are to understand, that this may be done several wayes. 1. When the worship proper to the *true God* is given to a *false God*. 2. When the *true God* is acknowledged and worshipped, but the *unity* of the *God-head* is denyed, and many *false Gods* are joyned with him in the same worship. In these two sorts of *Idolatry*, I acknowledge that the *true God* is rejected, either wholly in the first way, or by consequence in the second. But withal I say, that the giving the Worship to a creature which is due only to *God* may be consistent with the acknowledgement of one *Supream God*, and that these wayes. 1. When one *Supream God* is acknowledged, but no difference is put between the external Worship of him and creatures. This was the *Idolatry* of the wiser *Heathen*, who did in their consciences acknowledge

acknowledge that there was but one true and
 supream God, but yet gave the same worship
 to inferiour Deities, that they did to him.
 These men might have pleaded for them-
 selves, for all that I know, as much to
 their advantage, as those of the Church of
 Rome do against me. 2. When the wor-
 ship proper to the true God is given to an
 Image: or the supposing of God to be tru-
 ly honoured by us, by prostrating our selves
 before any corporeal representation of him.
 This likewise the Heathen were guilty of.
 St. Paul hath long since told us of some,
who profess that they know God, but in works Tit. I. 16.
they deny him; so there may be some who may
 profess a worship due only to God, but in
 their actions may contradict it. As suppose a
 company of rebellious men should declare
 over and over that they acknowledge but one
 Sovereign Power of this Nation, invested in
 the person of the King; but yet, should take
 upon themselves to raise forces, to appoint
 great Officers of State, and require that the
 very same outward reverence and honour be
 given to them, which is given to the King
 himself; would any man in his senses say, that
 because these men still declared the supream
 Authority to be in the King, that there was no
 Treason in such actions? or that those persons
 contradicted themselves, who allowed that
 their

their profession was such as became good subjects, but their actions made them guilty of *Treason*. The same we say of the *Church of Rome*; we confess they own the supream Power of the world to be in one *true God*, and we have no controversie with them about the essential Doctrines of Religion (which is, that we mean by their being a *true Church*) but withal we say, they overthrow what they say in their own practice, they rob *God* of the honour due only to him, by giving it to *Angels*, and *Saints*, and *Images* and other creatures. And what contradiction now is there in all this, that a *Church* agreeing with us in the object of worship in general, should act contrary to its own profession, by requiring those things to be done, which take away from *God* that honour which is due only to him, and giving it to creatures? And this, if I understand it, is all that this first contradiction in the charge of Idolatry doth amount to.

§. 3.
A distinct
answer to
his propo-
sitions.

To apply this now to his own *propositions*, for the greater clearness and satisfaction of all indifferent persons.

His first Proposition I agree to, viz. *That 'tis an article of faith, and a Fundamental point of Religion, that the honour which is due only to God is not to be given to a meer creature.* But I desire it may be taken notice of,

of, that this *proposition* is *Sophistically* expressed; for although it be no dispute between us, whether that *honour which is due only to God, may be given to a creature*, yet it is a very great one, and the foundation of the charge of Idolatry, *what that honour is which is due only to God*: and in case we can prove that they do give to meer Creatures any part of that *honour which is due to God*, it cannot at all excuse them to say, *that they acknowledge it to be Idolatry to give that honour, which they suppose to be due only to God, to a meer creature*. This *proposition* therefore, though in it self true, is captiously set down, and with an intention only to deceive unwary readers, as will appear by the next *proposition*.

2. To teach Idolatry is to err against the forementioned article of faith and Fundamental point of Religion; i. e. to teach Idolatry, is to teach that the honour which is due only to God is to be given to a meer creature. That this is to teach Idolatry, no one questions; but our question is, Whether they who do not teach this *Proposition*, may not teach men to do those things, whereby the worship due only to God will be given to a meer creature? If he can prove, that they who do not in terms declare that they do not dishonour God cannot dishonour him; if he can demonstrate,

demonstrate, that those who do not teach *that the honour which is due only to God is to be given to a creature*, cannot possibly by any actions of theirs rob him of that honour which is due to him: this will be much more to his purpose than any thing he hath yet said. And this *proposition*, if he had proceeded as he ought to have done, should not have been a particular *affirmative* but an *Universal Negative*: For it is not enough to say, that *to teach Idolatry, is to teach that the honour which is due only to God is to be given to a creature*, but that *No Church which doth not teach this can be guilty of Idolatry*; for his design being to clear the *Roman Church*, his *Proposition* ought to be so framed, that all particulars may be comprehended under it. But because he may say, *his immediate intention was, not to clear their Church from Idolatry, but to accuse me of a contradiction*, I proceed to the next *Proposition*.

3. *A Church that does not err against any article of faith, nor against any Fundamental point of Religion, does not teach Idolatry.* This proposition is likewise very *Sophistical* and *captious*; for by *article of faith and fundamental point of Religion* is either understood, *the main fundamental points of doctrine contained in the Apostles Creed*, and then I affirm, that a *Church* which doth own all the *Fundamentals of doctrine*,

ctrine, may be guilty of *Idolatry*, and teach those things, wherein it lyes; but if by *not erring against any article of faith*, be meant, that a Church which doth not err at all in matters of Religion cannot teach *Idolatry*, the Proposition is true, but *impertinent*.

4. That the Church of Rome doth teach *Veneration of Images, adoration of the Host, and Invocation of Saints*, is agreed on both sides.

5. That the Roman Church does not err against any article of faith or Fundamental point of Religion; This being that concession of ours, from whence all the force of his argument is taken, must be explained according to our own sense of it, and not according to that which he puts upon it; which that it may be better understood, I shall both shew in what sense this concession is made by us, as to the Church of Rome, and of what force it is in this present debate.

For the clearer understanding in what sense it is made by us, we are to consider the occasion of the Controversie about *Fundamentals* between us and the Church of Rome: which ought to be taken from that Book to which he refers. There we find the occasion of it to be, the *Romanists* contending that all points defined by the Church are *Fundamental*, or necessary to salvation, on the account of such a Definition; upon this the controversie about

§. 4.
In what
sense the
Church of
Rome is
owned by
us as a true
Church.
*Rational
Account,*
p. 47.

about *Fundamentals* was managed against them, with a design to prove that all things defined by the *Church of Rome* are not *Fundamental*, or *necessary to be believed* by all persons in order to their salvation, because they were so defined. To this purpose I enquired, 1. What the grounds are, on which any thing doth become necessary to salvation? 2. Whether any thing whose matter is not necessary, and is not required by an absolute command in *Scripture*, can by any means whatsoever afterwards become necessary? 3. Whether the *Church* hath power, by any proposition or definition, to make any thing become necessary to salvation, and to be believed as such, which was not so before? For the *first*, I proposed two things. 1. What things are necessary to the salvation of men as such, or considered in their single or private capacities? 2. What things are necessary to be owned in order to salvation by *Christian Societies*, or as the bonds and conditions of *Ecclesiastical communion*? For the resolving of this I laid down these three Propositions.

1. That the very being of a *Church*, doth suppose the necessity of what is required to be believed in order to salvation.

2. Whatever *Church* owns those things which are antecedently necessary to the Being of a *Church*, cannot so long cease to be

true Church. And here I expressly distinguished between the *essentials* of a Church, and those things which were required to the *Integrity* or soundness of it, among which latter I reckoned the *worship* of God in the way prescribed by him.

3. That the Union of the *Catholick Church* depended upon the agreement of it in things antecedently necessary to its being. From hence I proceeded to shew, that nothing ought to be owned as necessary to Salvation by Christian Societies, but such things which by all those Societies are acknowledged antecedently necessary to the *Being* of the *Catholick Church*. And here I distinguished between *necessary articles of faith*, and *particular agreements for the Churches peace*. I did not therefore deny, but that it was in the power of particular Churches, to require a *Subscription* to *articles of Religion*, opposite to the errors and abuses which they reformed; but I denied it to be in the power of any *Church* to make those things necessary articles of faith, which were not so before. And here it was I shewed the moderation of the *Church* of *England* above that of *Rome*; in that our *Church* makes *no articles of faith*, but such as have the testimony and approbation of the whole Christian world of all Ages, and are acknowledged to be such by *Rome* it self:

but the Church of Rome imposeth *new articles of faith*, to be believed as necessary to salvation; as appears by the *Bull of Pius 4.* This is my plain meaning, which half-witted men have stretched and abused to several ill purposes; but not to wander from my present subject, what is it that *J. W.* can hence infer to his purpose: *viz.* that from hence it follows, that the Church of Rome does not err against any article of faith, or any point necessary to salvation; which if it be only meant of those essential points of faith, which I suppose antecedently necessary to the Being of a Church, I deny it not, but do not see of what use this concession can be to them in the present debate: since in the following Discourse I made the *antient Creeds of the Catholick Church* the best measure of those things, which were believed to be necessary to salvation: so that the force of the argument comes to this, whatsoever Church does embrace the antient *Creeds* cannot be guilty of *Idolatry*; but the Church of Rome doth embrace all the antient *Creeds* by my own concession, therefore it is a contradiction for me to grant that they hold the *antient Creeds*, and yet to charge them with *Idolatry*. And these matters being thus made plain, there is no great difficulty to answer, by denying the *major Proposition*, and asserting that
a Church

a *Church* which does own all the articles of faith which are contained in them, may yet teach and practise those things, which take away from that worship which is proper only to God, and give it to meer creatures; as I have proved the *Church of Rome* doth in the worship of Images, adoration of the Host, and Invocation of Saints. But to make this yet more plain, there are two things we consider in a *Church*, the *essence*, and the *soundness* of it; as in a man, we consider his *being* a man and his *health*: when we discourse of his meer Being, we enquire into no more than those things which make him a man, whether he be sound or not: so in a *Church*, when we enquire into the *essentials* of it, we think it not necessary to go any farther than the doctrinal points of faith; the reason is, because *Baptism* admits men into the *Church* upon the profession of the true faith in the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; and whatever is sufficient to make a member of the *Church*, that is in it self sufficient, being embraced, to make a *Church*; but when we enquire farther into the *moral integrity*, or *soundness* of a *Church*, then we think our selves bound, not barely to know what is acknowledged and received, but how far it is so; and whether that *Church* which owns the Fundamentals of Christian faith, doth not by gross

and damnable errors corrupt the Worship of God, and debauch those very Principles which they profess to own. And in this respect none of us ever said, *That the Church of Rome did not err*; nay, we do say and have manifestly proved, that she hath erred against the Christian faith, by introducing palpable errors in doctrine, and manifold Superstitions and Idolatries in practice. From hence it plainly appears, that the concession *J. W.* urges me with of the *Church of Rome* being a true Church, signifies nothing, in the sense by me intended, which contradicts the charge of *Idolatry*; unless they can prove that none who own the *Apostles Creed*, or their *Baptism*, can so long as they do so, teach *Idolatry*, or be guilty of giving the honour due only to God to meer creatures. These things being thus explained, I hope the *Sophistry* of this way of arguing is made so evident, that no man of understanding that resolves not before-hand what to believe, is capable of being deceived by it.

§. 5.
His Appendix
considered.

Before I come to the next contradiction charged upon me, I shall for the diversion of the Reader, and the suitableness of the matter, take notice of his *Appendix*, wherein *J. W.* goes about so pleasantly to prove me an *Idolater*, by a notable trick, which it seems came into his head a little too late, after he had finished

night this worthy Treatise. I should have
 suspected it had been intended only for a
 piece of *Drollery*, but that the man so severely
 rebukes me for it, and withall talks of no-
 thing less than *demonstration* in the case.
 What? (thought I) is it come to this at last?
 and am I become an Idolater too, who was ne-
 ver apt to think my self enclined so much as to
 superstition? but what cannot the contro-
 verting Wit of man do, upon second and se-
 rious thoughts? All the comfort I found left
 was towards the conclusion, wherein he con-
 fesses *that the same argument proves the Pro-*
phets, Evangelists and Holy Ghost himself to
be Idolaters; Nay then, I hoped there was no
 great harm to be feared in so good company;
 and by that consideration armed my self
 against this terrible assault. But at last as he
 made nearer approaches to me, I found no
 mischief was like to come, but what I brought
 upon my self; for he charged me with no-
 thing but my own Artillery, and the train that
 was laid to blow me up was fetched from my
 own stores; only he had disposed it in a way
 fittest for this deep design. But the best of
 it was, his plot went no farther than my Ido-
 latry, and both lay only in *Imagination*. For
 there he makes the seat of my *Idolatry*, which
 he demonstratively proves must be so by my
 own argument. I shall therefore consider

Dr. St.
 against Dr.
 St. p. 21.

what that was, and with what great art he imployes it against me. Among other arguments to shew that the prohibition of worshipping *Images* was not peculiar to the *Jews*, but of an unalterable nature, I insisted upon *Gods* declaring the unsuitableness of it to his own infinite and incomprehensible nature, which could not be represented to men, but in a way which must be an infinite disparagement to it. *To whom will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare to him? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth,* &c. and the reason given of the Law it self was, because *they saw no similitude of God*; from hence I shewed, that the wisest Nations and Persons among the Heathen looked on the Worship of *God* by *Images*, as unsuitable to a Divine and Infinite Being, and that the *Gospel* still more discovered *Gods* Spiritual nature, and the agreeableness of Spiritual Worship to him; that the *Apostles* urged this Argument against the Heathen Idolatry; and the *Fathers* of the *Church* thought the reason of this Law did equally oblige us with the *Jews*; now by what art doth he from hence prove me necessarily to be an Idolater, as well as they of the *Church of Rome*, who Worship *God* by *Images* against the very words and reason of this Law? The argument is briefly summed up by himself thus: *whoever worships*

Roman Idolatry, p. 55.
2. edit.

Isa. 40. 19,
22.

Deut. 4.
15, 16.

P. 20.]

Worships God represented in a way far inferior to his greatness is an Idolater; but whosoever worships God represented to him without the Beatifical vision, either by words or by imaginations as well as Images, he worships God in a way far inferior to his greatness; Ergo, whoever worships God represented unto him without the Beatifical vision is an Idolater: but Dr. St. worships God without the Beatifical vision (no doubt of it) Ergo, Dr. St. is an Idolater: there is no help for it. Nay, from hence he proves, that I cannot so much as think of God without Idolatry my self, nor Preach of him without provoking others to it. O the insuperable force of reason, and the dint of demonstration! but the mischief is, all this subtilty is used against the Law-maker, and not against me. Did I not cite the words of God himself, who therefore did forbid the making any likeness of him, because nothing could be like him? Is there no difference between having imperfect conceptions of God in our minds, and making unworthy representations of him to our senses, with a design to worship them? Why did not God as well forbid the one, as he did the other? Were the Israelites then in the Beatifical vision? Were their conceptions of God suitable to his incomprehensible nature? if not, why were they not forbidden as well

to think of *God* as to make any *Images* of him? Is *God* as much disparaged by the necessary weakness of our understandings, as by voluntarily false and corporeal *Images* of him? Nay, doth not *God* design to prevent the error of our *Imaginations* by such prohibitions as those are? and thereby commands us to think worthily of him, and when we pray to him, to consider him only as an Infinite Being in his Nature and Attributes? I do not know what *Imaginations* others have of *God*; it may be those in the *Church of Rome* measure all by themselves, and *God* by their *Images* of him, and thence conclude, that no men can think of *God*, but as they picture him, like an *Old man sitting in Heaven*; but I assure them, I never had such an *Imagination* of him, and if I had, should think it very unworthy of him. I know no other conception of *God*, but of a Being infinitely perfect; and this is rather an intellectual apprehension, than a material imagination of him. I am assured that he is, by mighty and convincing arguments; but to bring him down to my *Imagination*, is to contradict the evidence that I have of his *Being*; for the same reasons which convince me that he is, do likewise convince me that he is infinite in power, and wisdom, and goodness. If I thought otherwise of him, I should know no
reason

reason to give him the Worship of my mind and soul. Although my conceptions cannot reach his greatness, yet they do not confine it, nor wilfully debase it; they do not bring him down to the meanness of a Corporeal Image. But because we cannot think highly enough of *God*, must we therefore devise wayes to expose him to contempt and scorn? And we cannot but despise a *Deity* to whom any Image can be like. But such absurd and silly arguments deserve no farther confutation. *They* indeed may take more liberty, who write to those who are bound not to judge of what is writ, but only to cry it up. As for us, who think it not fit to have our People in such slavery, we dare not venture such idle stuff among them.

I come therefore to the second contradiction he charges me with, which is, concerning the danger of salvation which they are lyable to who communicate with the *Roman Church*, when yet I acknowledge *that Church to be a true Church, and therefore to be a true way to salvation*: and withall *Archbishop Laud, whom I defend, doth grant a possibility of salvation to those in the Church of Rome*. The force of this contradiction depending on these concessions, I shall,

1. Shew in what sense they are granted by us.
2. Examine the strength of the *proposi-*

§. 6.
The second
contradi-
ction Exa-
mined.

ons

ons he draws from hence, towards the making this a contradiction.

Rational
Account,
p. 293.

P. 295.

I. Concerning *the Roman Church being a true Church*: The *Arch-bishops Adversary* having falsely charged him with granting the *Roman Church* to be a *right Church*, he complains of his injustice in it; and saith, *that it is a Church and a true Church he granted, but not a right Church*; for *Truth only imports the Being; right, perfection in conditions*; thus a *Thief is a true man, though not an upright man*. So a *corrupt Church may be true, as a Church is a company of men which profess the faith of Christ, and are baptized into his name; but it is not therefore a right Church either in Doctrine or Manners*; and again saith, *It is true in that sense, as ens and verum, being and true, are convertible one with another; and every thing that hath a Being is truly that Being which it is in truth of substance*. The *Replyer* to him, saith, *that the notion of a Church implies Integrity and Perfection of conditions*; upon which I gave him this Answer, That he did herein betray his weak or wilful mistakes of a *Church morally for Metaphysically true*. If he could prove it impossible for a *Church* to retain its *Being* that hath any errors in doctrine, or corruptions in practice, he would therein do something to the

the purpose ; but when he had done it, all that he would get by it was , that then we should not so much as acknowledge the *Roman Church* to be *Metaphysically* a true Church ; and therefore the Reader is left to judge, whether his Lordships Charity for, or his Testimony against their Church was built upon better grounds. By this it is evident in what sense it was granted , that the *Roman Church* was a true Church.

2. Concerning possibility of salvation in that Church ; To the question that was asked my Lord of Canterbury , whether a person might be saved in the Roman faith ? he gives *Ar. b. B. Lauds Conference, p. 280.* this Answer , That the Ignorant that could not discern the errors of that Church, so they held the Foundation , and conformed themselves to a Religious life might be saved : and *P. 282.* after explains himself more fully, that might be saved, grants but a possibility, no sure or safe way of salvation ; the possibility, I think, which he, cannot be denied to the Ignorants, specially because they hold the Foundation and cannot survey the building. And the Foundation can deceive no man that rests upon it : But a secure way they cannot go, that hold with such corruptions when they know them. And again, Many Protestants indeed confess, *P. 284.* there is salvation possible to be attained in the Roman Church ; but yet they say withal, that

P. 199.

that the errors of that Church are so many, (and some so great, as weaken the Foundation) that it is very hard to go that way to Heaven, especially to them that have had the truth manifested. And in another place, I do indeed for my part (leaving other men free to their own judgement) acknowledge a possibility of salvation in the Roman Church: but so as that which I grant to Romanists, is not as they are Romanists, but as they are Christians, that is, as they believe the Creed, and hold the Foundation Christ himself, not as they associate themselves wittingly and knowingly to the gross Superstitions of the Roman Church. And I am willing to hope there are many among them, which keep within that Church, and yet wish the Superstitions abolished which they know, and which pray to God to forgive their errors in what they know not, and which hold the Foundation firm, and live accordingly, and would have all things amended that are amiss, were it in their power. And to such I dare not deny a possibility of salvation, for that which is Christs in them, though they hazard themselves extreemly, by keeping so close to that which is Superstition, and in the case of Images comes too near Idolatry. These are my Lord of Canterburies own words, and laid together in my Defence of him, which J. w
ough

Rational
Account,
P. 622.

ought to have represented, if he had designed any thing but *sophistry* and trifling. But his game had been then quite spoiled; the fine sport of making contradictions had been lost, and his cross purposes had come to nothing.

I now come to see what *contradictions* he wire-draws from hence by the help of his *Propositions*.

1. *Whoever is in a condition, wherein he is certainly saved, is in no danger or probability of being damned.* If by he is certainly saved, he speaks of the event, then he were a hard hearted man that would not grant, that he that is actually saved is in no danger or probability of being damned; if he means it of a certain way to salvation, then it is yet capable of several meanings. For to be in a certain way may imply one of these three things. 1. That the way it self is so plain that a man cannot miss of it. 2. Or that the way is in it self certain, but there are so many by-paths and turnings lying hard by it, that it is a very hard matter for any man to keep in it. 3. To be in a certain way, is, when not only the way it self is certain, but a man keeps constantly in that way. According to these several senses this Proposition may be understood; if by it be meant. 1. *He that is in a certain way to salvation, is in no danger or probability*

probability of being damned; i. e. he that keeps constantly in that way which will certainly lead him to Heaven, the Proposition is true, but impertinent; but if by it be meant no more but this, *that he is in a way which in it self leads to Heaven, but there are so many cross and by-paths near it, that though it be possible for him to hit it, yet it is extremely hazardous*, no one can imagine that such a one is in no probability of miscarrying, for we say he is in very great danger of it, notwithstanding the tendency of the way it self.

2. Prop. *whoever lives and dyes in a true way to salvation, having conformed to its directions, or whoever has done all that was necessary to attain unto salvation is in a condition, wherein he is certainly saved.* The *Sophistry* of this is so palpable, that the weakest eye may discern it, for it supposes that *true way* to salvation wherein he lives to be a *very safe and secure way*, i. e. that it be not only true in it self, but free from such errors and corruptions which may endanger salvation; and in that sense it is *true*, but very far from the purpose. For none of us did ever yield that the *Roman Church* is a *safe way* to salvation; nay, it is expressly denyed by my *Lord of Canterbury*, as well as by me. But here lyes still another piece of *Sophistry* to be taken notice of, *whoever hath done all that*

that

that was necessary to attain salvation, is in condition wherein he is certainly saved; no doubt of it; but the doing all that is necessary to salvation is not bare believing the necessary articles of faith, contained in the Creed, but obeying the *will of God*; which cannot be done by those who wilfully adhere to gross and open violations of it; as I have charged the *Church of Rome* to do, in her solemn acts of Worship. Their cause certainly is at a very low ebb, when such pitiful *Sophistry*, must pass for reasoning and demonstration among them. Never men had more need of a *self-evidencing cause*, as well as *propositions*, than they; so little help do they contribute to it by their Writings.

3. Prop. *The Roman Church is a true way to salvation, and teaches all that is necessary to attain unto it.* This is granted, he saith, by *me and other Protestants*, when we acknowledge the *Roman Church to be a true Church*; but in what sense, I have already explained, so far as to leave no colour of arguing from silence to any contradiction in me. For this *true way to salvation* in our sense is no more, but that the *Church of Rome* doth acknowledge so much of Christian faith, as is sufficient to save men, on condition they live accordingly, and do not by gross corruptions in doctrine or practice render that faith ineffectual

to them: but withall we assert and maintain that to these necessary articles of Christian faith, the *Church of Rome* hath added such errours and corruptions, as make the salvation of any person extreemly hazardous, who lives in the communion of it. And let them have all the comfort from hence which they can, I am sure they have not this, that they have brought me to contradict my self by such concessions as these.

By this, his last Proposition comes to nothing; *whoever lives and dyes in the communion of the Roman Church, having conformed to her doctrine, lives and dyes in a true way to salvation having conformed to its directions, and has done all that was necessary to attain to it.* Which evidently supposes that we yield that the doctrine of the *Roman Church*, is a safe way to salvation, which we utterly deny; all that we assert is, that so much of the common Principles of Christianity, as is retained in the *Roman Church*, is sufficient for the salvation of those, who do not wilfully corrupt them by bad opinions and practices, or if they have, do repent sincerely. But for those who conform themselves to the doctrine and directions of the *Roman Church* as such, we are far from ever saying that *such live and dye in a true way to salvation*; for this were to make those doctrines and

directions to be as holy and innocent as we believe them to be false and pernicious. See now what a contradiction here is; for me to assert the *Church of Rome* to be a *true Church*, because it retains the *Fundamentals of Christianity*; and yet to make the condition of those who live in it so hazardous in point of salvation, by reason of the gross errors, which men are bound to believe as necessary points of faith, and horrible Superstitions which they must conform to, if they follow her directions. Surely he could not but know this to be our meaning, and consequently to have no shadow of contradiction in it, no more than is in this plain Proposition, *That a possible way to salvation may yet be very dangerous.* But though jugglers know their own cheats, they would lose their trade, if they made them known to the people. Something must be said to amuse them, and this seemed the prettiest way, to confound them, by dazeling their eyes with such appearances of contradictions: and thereby to perswade their own party, that they need not fear the attack of such an enemy who falls foul upon himself. But it is nothing but the mists he casts before their eyes, can make any have such an imagination; it is but making things clear, and then nothing but order and agreement appears.

St. against
St. P. 7.

But yet he quarrels with me, for making the case of *living in wilful sin and in the corruptions of the Roman Church parallel with each other*; 1. Because I will not grant that a wilful sin, such as adultery, to be a true way to Heaven; and doth he think that I ever imagined Idolatry and gross superstition to be so; If I grant that in the Church of Rome they have a true way to Heaven, it is as other debauched Christians have, who own faith enough to save them, but their destruction comes from not living agreeably to it. 2. Because I grant more to them than to Jews or Pagans, yet they may be saved if they do repent. True, but they are not in so great likelihood of repenting, as those who own the Fundamental articles of the Christian faith, and have a sincere desire in general to serve God according to his will; the Grace of God being more plentiful, where the Christian faith is owned, than where it is rejected; upon which account Jews and Heathens are in more danger of not repenting, and consequently of salvation than those that live in the Roman Church. 3. Because I grant a greater capacity of salvation to Roman Catholicks than they do to Protestants; but they do not deny it to Protestants if they repent. But the difference lyes in the nature and acts of the repentance required; We say a general repentance

and a vertuous sincere mind, which desires to know and do the will of God may be sufficient, together with a particular repentance of all known miscarriages; but they say such a repentance is necessary for us, as does imply a disowning our *Church*, as such wherein no salvation is to be had, and a joyning with the Communion of the *Church of Rome*: therefore the question about their charity and ours, is about the possibility of the salvation of persons living and dying in the *communion* of either *Church*; We say on the conditions before mentioned, men may be saved, though they do not in terms renounce their communion, but they say that none who do not return to their communion can be saved; and in this we justly charge them with horrible uncharitableness, when many of their Writers allow a greater possibility of salvation to meer Heathens.

4. *Because Arch-bishop Laud grants a greater capacity of salvation than other Protestants;* but in what sense I have already shewed.

5. *That this is in effect to say, that it is a true way to Heaven if they go out of it.* Not if they go out of it so far as it is true, but so far only as it is false and dangerous. If a man were going the right way from *London* to *York*, as far as *Stamford*, and there went quite out of his way into the *Fens*, where his life is in danger; if I should tell this man that the way

from *London* to *York* was a *certain way*, that the way he went in as far as *Stamford* was a *true way*, and if he had kept in it, would have brought him to *York*, but the way he is now in is very *dangerous*, and if he does not return, his life is in perpetual hazard; is this all one as if I should tell him, *while you were in the true way, you must go out of it*? No such sense can be put upon such words, by any man that hath sense; and for others, we give them leave to cry *nonsense* and *contradiction*.

P. 8.

All his other petty objections run upon the same palpable mistake, and it would be but repeating the same thing to answer the other remaining cavils upon this Argument.

§. 7.
The charge
of Fanaticism de-
fended.

I come therefore to the fore place indeed, the touching whereof hath made them to kick and wince so much at me; and that is the *Fanaticism* of the *Roman Church*. Which made them complain to *Cesar*, that *it was a new crime, and never heard of before*. What? they; the sober, the judicious, the wise people of the *Church of Rome* turned *Fanaticks*! 'it's false, it's impossible; nay, it is absolutely and utterly impossible to be true; and none but *Atheists* can charge them with it. This hath been their common way of answering to this new charge; but not one *single word* hath been said in a just Vindication of

of themselves, by giving answer to those many plain, and undeniable Instances I have produced. I wished for no other tryal than to be bound to bring forth their own Authors, and to make good the Authorities I had cited, and my fidelity therein; but they have fairly declined this way of tryal. But how then can they free themselves from this imputation? we have men of art to deal with, and it is some pleasure to observe the skill they use in warding off a blow they did not look for. But if they have nothing more to say than *J. W.* can help them to, the charge will stick the faster, for his attempt to clear them of it.

He begins with a* description of *Fanaticism*. *P. 8.* *cism, which, he saith, doth necessarily contain a resistance of authority; and for this, very unhappily quotes my own words. By Fanaticism we understand either an Enthusiastick way of Religion, or resisting authority under pretence of Religion; just as if one should say, the true notion of Idolatry implyes the renouncing the true God, and to prove it should quote words of mine to this purpose, That Idolatry is either renouncing the true God, or worshipping the true God by an Image: for as in that case, it is evident, I make two sorts of Idolatry; so it is as plain in this, that I make two branches of Fanaticism, whereof*

Fanaticism
of Rom.
Church,
J. 16, p. 299.
2. ed.

the one is, an *Enthusiastick way of Religion*, the other *resistance of authority under the pretence of Religion*. But if this be the true notion of *Fanaticism*, why doth he not speak one word in vindication of them, from that very kind of *Fanaticism*, which I had charged them to be so deeply guilty of? Had I not proved by plain testimonies, that the most *Fanatick* principles of Rebellion were owned by the Jesuitical party among them? viz. *The Kings deriving his power from the people*, and the *peoples authority to call the King to an account*, and if they see good to take away his power and change the Government; and not only so, but to take away his life too? Had I not proved by clear and late Instances, that the party which owns these principles is to this day the most countenanced and encouraged at Rome? and any honest men among them, as to these principles, are on that account hated and persecuted, * as *P. W.* and his *Brethren*. But why no answer to this charge? These are things they cannot deny, and yet dare not confess them to be true. If *J. W.* answer again, let him speak out like a man, and either confess and detest these Principles, or we shall charge them farther with this worst and most dangerous sort of *Fanaticism*. My duty and just zeal for his *Majesties* interest and security, will not suffer me to let

go this part of the charge against them, although they would fain have it passed over in silence, as though never a word had been said concerning it. This is one of the best arts I have met with in this Pamphlet, for unwary Readers will not remember the charge, when they find no answer: but if *J. W.* had attempted to answer it, his shuffling and tricks might have made the deeper impression in the Readers minds. Remember then this charge stands good against them, without so much as their pretending to answer it.

To come now to the other part of *Fanaticism*, viz. *an Enthusiastick way of Religion*: and here to proceed clearly, I shall lay down the method of his *Defence*, and then examine it. The strength of his *Defence* lyes in these *Propositions*.

1. *That Fanaticism does necessarily contain a resistance against authority.*

2. *No particular wayes of Religion, countenanced by a competent authority, are Fanaticism.*

3. *Those things which concern religious Orders and Method of Devotion, which I charge them with, are countenanced by a competent authority, viz. The Authority of that Church.*

4. *That Church cannot countenance Fanaticism which obligeth all persons to submit to her judgement.*

So that here are two Principles by which *J. W.* thinks to vindicate their Church from *Fanaticism*; viz. *competent authority*, and *submission of judgement to the Church*. To shew the invalidity of this answer, I shall do these things.

1. Shew the insufficiency of it.

2. The monstrous absurdities consequent upon it.

1. If this answer were *sufficient*, he must make it appear, that there have been none charged by me as *Fanaticks* in their Church, but such as have submitted themselves and their judgement to the authority of their Church. For let us consider the occasion of this charge, and we shall presently discern the insufficiency of this way of answering it. The occasion was, that my Adversary made all the *Sects* and *Fanaticisms* among us to be the effect of the *Reformation*; what answer could be more proper in this case, than to shew, that there were as wild and extravagant *Fanaticisms* before, as have been since: which is a plain evidence that cannot be the cause of them, to which they imputed them. To make this out, I searched into the several sorts of *Fanaticism*, and gave instances very clear of as great *Fanaticks* in the times before the reformation, as have been since; from the many pretenders to immediate Revelations among

among them, who were persons allowed and approved by their Church, and some of them *Canonized for Saints*; but besides these, I gave such other Instances of *Fanaticism* among the *Friers*, and others of their *Church*, as were never heard of in the world before; as the broachers and mainrainers of the *Friers Gospel*, which was to put out of doors the *Gospel of Christ*; the *Spiritual Brethren* of the order of *S. Francis* called by several names, but especially that of *Fratricelli*, who continued long, spread far, and more disturbed the *Church*, than any since have done, the *Dulcinista* in *Italy*, the *Alumbrado's* in *Spain*, &c. What doth he now say concerning all these? Were these countenanced by a competent authority among them? Did they submit their judgement to the *Church*? if neither of these be pretended in reference to them, then this answer must be very insufficient, because it doth not reach to the matter in charge.

2. For those who were as he saith, countenanced by authority, and did submit themselves to the *Church*, yet this doth not clear them from *Fanaticism*; but draws after it these monstrous absurdities.

1. That prevailing *Fanaticism* ceases to be *Fanaticism*; like *Treason*, which when it prospers none dare call it *Treason*; an excellent way, this, to vindicate the *Fanaticism* of the
late

late times, which because *countenanced* by *authority*, supposed *competent* enough by some who then writ of *Obedience* and *Government*, it ceased to be *Fanaticism*; and all the wild and extravagant heats of mens brains, their *Enthusiasms* and *Revelations* were Regular and orderly things, because *countenanced* by such *Authority* as was then over them.

2. By this rule the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, nay, our *Lord* himself, were unavoidably *Fanaticks*; for what *competent authority* had they to *countenance* them? The *Jewish Church* was not yet cast off while our *Saviour* lived, but utterly opposed his doctrine and *Revelation*, as coming from a private Spirit of his own; according therefore to these excellent Principles, our *B. Saviour* is made a meer *Fanatick*, because he wanted a *competent Authority* of the *present Church* to *countenance* him; the same was generally the case of the *Prophets*, and of all the *Apostles*. But what *Rocks* and *Precipices* will a bad cause drive men upon? If that which makes *Fanaticism* or not *Fanaticism*, be the being *countenanced* or not *countenanced* by this *competent Authority*, these horrible absurdities are unavoidable and all Religion must be resolved into the will and pleasure of this *competent Authority*. But I need not take such pains to prove this, for my brave Answerer *J. W.* sets it down in his own words

words. Moreover, otherwise all the particular St. against
 manners of Preaching or Praying practised by St. p. 9.
 the Prophets, and all their extraordinary vi-
 sions and revelations would be flat Fanaticism;
 but, because they were countenanced by a com-
 petent authority, they could not deserve that
 character. Excellent doctrine for a Popish
Leviathan! Are you in earnest Sir? Do you
 think the Prophets had been *Fanaticks*, in
 case of no competent authority to countenance
 them? What competent authority had the I Kings 19.
 Prophet *Elijah* to countenance him, when all 18.
 the Authority that then was, not only opposed Rom. 11. 3.
 him, but sought his life? What competent
 Authority had any of the Prophets who were
 sent to the ten Tribes? What had *Jeremiah*,
Ezekiel, and the rest of them? It seems then,
 all these excellent and inspired persons are cast
 into the common herd of *Fanaticks*, for want
 of this competent Authority to countenance
 them. And yet this is the Man (merely be-
 cause I lay open the *Fanaticism* of some their
 pretended *Saints*, such as *Ignatius Loyola* and
S. Francis) who ranks me with *Lucian* and
Porphyrie: hath he not himself a great zeal for
 Religion the mean while, resolving all reve-
 lation into his competent authority? and not
 only so, but paralleling the expressions and
 practices of *S. Brigitt*, and *Mother Juliana*,
 than which scarce any thing was ever Printed
 more

more ridiculous in the way of *Revelations* with those of the holy Prophets and Apostles. If a man designed to speak mischievously against the *Scriptures* and *Divine Revelations*, he could not do it more to purpose than J. W. hath done in these words: when he compares things whose folly is so manifest at the first view, with that divine Wisdom, which inspired those holy persons, whom God sent upon particular messages to his people, and gave so great assurance that he sent them; and who delivered matters of great weight and moment, and not such tittle tattle as those two Womens Books are fraught withal. But if this be the way they have to vindicate them from being *Fanaticks*, it is absolutely the worst that could be thought of; for it cannot discover so high an opinion of them, as it doth a very mean one of the *Books* of *Scripture*, and the *Divine Revelations* therein contained. I could here earnestly intreat the wiser men of that *Church*, for the honour of *God*, and the *Christian Religion*, not to suffer such inconsiderate persons to vindicate their cause, who to defend the extravagant infirmities of some *Enthusiastical* women among them, are so forward to cast dirt and reproach upon our common Religion, and those Revelations from whence we derive it. But I forbear; only it is a shrewd sign, if this way be allowed, of a wretched

wretched cause, that cannot be maintained without plunging those, who rely upon their word, into the depths of *Atheism*. But these are not things to be so slightly passed over, they deserve a fuller and severer chastisement. For the present, this is enough to shew, what monstrous absurdities this way of vindicating their *Church* from *Fanaticism* hath brought *J. W.* to. Yet in one respect he deserves some pardon, for they are wont to write their answers upon the common Themes out of some launch Authors, who considered a little better what they writ; But this was a new charge, and neither *Bellarmin*, *Becanus*, nor any of their old beaten souldiers, could give them any assistance; they found not the Title of the *Fanaticism* of the *Roman Church* in any of their *common-place-Books*; therefore plain Mother-wit must help them, and so it hath bravely. But before they again attempt this matter, I desire them to consider these things, lest they should in a desperate humour utterly give up the cause of *Religion*, finding themselves unable to defend that of their *Church*.

1. Whether there can be any greater *Fanaticism*, than a false pretence to immediate divine Revelation? For what can more expose men to all the follies and delusions imaginable, than this will do? what actions can be
so

so wild and extravagant but men may do, under such a pretence of *immediate Revelation* from God? what bounds of order and Government can be perserved? some may pretend a Revelation to take up Arms against their Prince, or to destroy all they meet (which is no unheard of thing) others may not go so far, but may have revelations of the unlawfulness of Kingly Government; others may pretend revelations of a *new Gospel*, and a more *spiritual dispensation* than hath been yet in the World, as the *Mendicant Fryer* did.

2. Whether we are bound to believe all such who say, They have divine revelations: or whether persons may not be deceived in thinking they have revelations, when they are only delusions of their own Fancies or the Devil? if not; then every one is to be believed who pretends to these things, and then all follies and contradictions must be swallowed which men say they have by immediate revelation; and every *Fanatick* must be believed, to have divine revelation who believes himself though he be only deluded by his own Imagination, or become *Enthusiastical* by the power of a disease in his head, or some great heat in his blood.

3. Whether

3. Whether there must not be some certain rules established whereby all persons, and even competent authority it self, must proceed in judging these pretences to revelation, whether they be true or false? for if they proceed without rule, they must either be inspired too, or else, must receive all who pretend to divine revelations: If there be any certain rules, whereby the revelation is to be judged; then if any persons receive any revelation against those rules, whether are other persons bound to follow their judgement against those rules?

4. Whether there can be any more certain rule of judging, than that two things evidently contradictory to each other, cannot both come from divine revelation? For then God must contradict himself, which is impossible to be supposed, and would overthrow the faith of any divine revelation. And this is the plain case of the revelations made to two famous Saints in the Roman Church, St. Brigitt and St. Catharine; to one it was revealed, that the B. Virgin was conceived with Original sin; to the other, that she was not: both these have competent Authority, for they were both Canonized for Saints by the Roman Church, and their Revelations approved, and therefore (according to J. W.) neither of them were Fanatics, though it is certain that

that one of their Revelations was false. For either God must contradict himself, or one of these must be deceived, or go about to deceive, and what greater *Fanaticism* can there be, than that is? if one of these had only some *Fanatic Enthusiasm*, and the other divine Revelation, then competent authority and submission to the judgement of the Church, is not a rule to judge *Fanaticism* by; for those were equal in both of them.

5. Whether there be an equal reason to look for revelations now, as in the time of the *Prophets*, and our *Saviour*, and his *Apostles*? or whether God communicates revelations to no other end, but to please and gratifie some *Enthusiastical* tempers? and what should be the reason he should do it more now, than in the age wherein revelations were more necessary? In those times God revealed his mind to men, but it was for the benefit of others; when he sent them upon particular messages, as the *Prophets*, or made known some future events to them of great importance to the Church, as the coming of the *Messias*, &c. or Inspired them to deliver weighty doctrines to the world, as he did both the *Prophets* and *Apostles*: why should we think, that God now, when the revelations of these holy and inspired persons are upon record, and all things necessary to his Church are contained therein, should

For should vary this method of his, and entertain
 some melancholy and retired women, or other
 Enthusiastical persons with visions and revelati-
 ons of no use to his Church?

6. Whether God doth ever Inspire persons
 with immediate revelations without giving
 sufficient evidence of such Inspiration? For if
 he did, it were to leave men under a tempta-
 tion to Infidelity without means to withstand
 it; if he doth not, then we have reason to
 examine the evidence, before we believe the
 revelation. The evidence God gave of old
 was either the Prophecy of a succession of
Prophets, by one whose commission was at-
 tested by great miracles, as *Moses*, who told
 the *Israelites*, they were to expect *Prophets*;
 and laid down *rules* to judge of them by; or
 else by *miracles* wrought by themselves as by
 the *Apostles* whom our *Lord* sent abroad to
 declare his will to the world. And where
 these are not, what reason is there to receive
 any new Revelations as from *God*; especially
 when the main predictions of the New Te-
 stament are of *false Prophets*, and *false Mi-
 racles*?

7. Whether the *Revelations* of their pre-
 tended *Saints* being countenanced by the Au-
 thority of their *Church*, be equally received
 among them, with the Revelations contained
 in *Scripture*? if they be, then they ought to

E

have

have equal reverence paid to them, and they ought to read them as *Scripture*, to cite their Authority as divine, and to believe them as infallible as *Christ* and his *Apostles*; if they be not, then whatever they pretend, they are not looked on as divine revelations by them, as manifestly appears, because they are wholly rejected by some of the wisest of them, doubted of, and disputed by others, as it were easie to prove; were it not too large a subject for this discourse, but by none received as writings of divine authority, and equal with the *Scriptures*, which they must be if they came from the same Spirit. And since they are not, it is evident that they are no otherwise esteemed among themselves, than as the *Fanatick* hearts of some devout persons of disturbed and deluded Fancies; whom notwithstanding they are willing to cherish, partly because they are loth to discountenance any pretence to an *infallible Spirit* in their Church, and partly that there may never be wanting matter to make *Saints* of when the *Pope* thinks fit, and good consideration is offered. This may suffice to make good this charge of *Fanaticism* against the *Roman Church* and to shew that I am as far from the appearance of any contradiction therein (although these Revelations are not from a real one) as *J. W.* vain and Sophistical talk is from any appearance of reason.

The last contradiction charged upon me, §. 8.
 is, *about the Divisions of the Roman Church*. No con-
 The occasion of which discourse was, that tradiction
divisions were objected to me as another con- in the
 sequent of the *Reformation*; upon which I charge of
 thought my self obliged to enquire into the divisions:
Unity of their *Church*, and I have at large
 proved from undenyable Instances, attested by
 their own Authors, that they have no reason
 to insult over other *Churches* on account of
 their divisions, nor to boast of their own
Unity and Peace. For I have there proved
 that there have never been greater disturbances
 in the Christian World, than what they call
 the means of *Unity*, viz. the *Popes Authority*;
 hath procured, no where greater or more last-
 ing *Schisms*, no where fiercer disputes about
 matters of order and doctrine, than among
 them. I considered all their *salvo's* and from
 them shew'd, that if they have no divisions
 among themselves, neither have we; nay the
 same arguments which prove they do not differ
 in matters of faith from each other, do like-
 wise prove that they and we do not differ
 from each other in those things. And what
 faith *J. W.* to all this? Instead of healing
 their own divisions, he only designs to prove
 me to be divided against my self, that he
 might make up the full Tale of his contradi-
 ctions.

But *J. W.* had so much forgot himself as to make good the very thing I designed; and by that very argument he uses to prove that I contradict my self, he manifestly proves that there are no more divisions in matters of faith, between the *Roman Church* and *us* than there are among themselves. This I shall make very evident, but I must proceed as he doth with his Propositions.

1. *No divisions from the Roman Church are divisions of the Roman Church.* This is a very subtle principle of unity among them, and by this rule there would be an admirable Unity in the *Roman Church*, if the Pope himself were left alone in it. For all others would only be *divided from* it, and I would allow the *Pope* to be at a very good Agreement with himself, which is more than *J. W.* will allow me: In this case indeed there would be *Unity*, but where would be their *Church*? Suppose a shepherd should boast of the excellent Government of a great Flock he had under his command, and the Unity and peace they lived in; and a by-stander should tell him that he saw others pretend to the same authority over that flock that he did, and part followed one and part another, he saw some of the chief of the Leaders set themselves against him disputing his authority, he saw many of the sheep continually fighting

with

with each other, and some had wholly forsaken him; would it not be a pleasant thing for this shepherd to say, that notwithstanding all this they had great peace and Unity, because as many as did not quarrel were very quiet, and those that were divided from his Government were not under it? But our question is, whether such authority be the means to preserve the whole flock under Government, when we see it prevents no divisions, but causes many? He might have spoken more to the purpose if he had framed his Proposition thus, *There can be no divisions in the Roman Church, but such as divide men from it*; and in that case the *Roman Church* would have been reduced to a very small number. But if there may be such *divisions* which are contrary to Unity and peace, as divisions in matters of faith are, to what purpose is it to shew that they have none in one kind, if they have very great in all others? But although this be not sufficient to demonstrate their *Unity*, yet it is enough for his purpose, if it doth shew that I contradict my self. But where lyes the contradiction? The force of it lyes here. *I charge them with divisions in matters of faith, when divisions in matters of faith make them not to be members of the Roman Church; therefore there can be no divisions in the Roman Church in matters of faith.*

faith. Again (for in these two arguments the substance of his own propositions is couched by himself) *All those who assent unto the antient Creeds are undivided in matters of faith; but all Roman Catholicks assent unto the antient Creeds; Ergo, all Roman Catholicks are undivided in matters of faith, and consequently it is a calumny in me to say they are divided in these matters.* Now, what an easie matter is it to dispossess me of this *Spirit of contradiction*, which he imagines me possessed with? I need no holy water, or sacred charms and exorcisms to do it with. There needs no more but understanding what is meant by *matters of faith*; when *matters of faith* are spoken of by me in the place he refers to, it is evident to every one that reads it, and by his own words I speak only of *the Fundamental and necessary articles of faith, which are necessary to the salvation of all and to the very being of a Church*; of which kind I say none ought to be esteemed, that were not admitted into the antient *Creeds*. But when I charge them with divisions in *matters of faith*, I do not mean that they reject the antient *Creeds*, but I take *matters of faith* in their own sense for things defined by the Church; and if J. W. had sought for any thing but words to raise cavil upon, he might have found it so explained in

the very place where I speak of this. For that discourse is to answer an objection of theirs, *That they do not differ in those things which they esteem matters of faith*; and particularly I insisted upon that; that they cannot be sure whether they differ in matters of faith or no, because they are not agreed what makes things to become *matters of faith*. Can this be understood any other way than of their *own sense* of matters of faith? And is not this fair dealing to make me contradict my self because where I argue against them I take *matters of faith* in *their sense*; and where I deliver my own opinion, I take them in *another sense*? And this being the sense of matters of faith, the trifling of his arguing appears; for do all these cease to be members of their *Church* who dispute any thing which others account *matter of faith* among them? Are the *Jesuits* all out of the *Church of Rome*, because they deny the efficacy of *Grace* which the *Dominicans* account a *matter of faith*? Are the *Jansenists* and *oral Traditionists* divided from the *Church of Rome*; because they deny the *Popes Infallibility*, which the *Jesuits* account a *matter of faith*? If not, then all divisions in matters and articles of faith, are not divisions from the true Church and from all her members; and so his second Proposition comes to nothing: and so likewise the third, *that*

Divis. of
the Rom.
Church.
f. 15. p. 397.
2. ed.

all divisions in matters of faith, so esteemed by them, are divisions from the Roman Church.

But the fourth and fifth Propositions are the most healing Principles that have yet been thought on. Fie for shame! why should we and they of the *Church of Rome* quarrel thus long? we are very well agreed in all matters of faith, and I shall demonstratively prove it from the argument of *J. W.* drawn from his two last Propositions. *All who assent unto the antient Creeds are undivided in matters of faith, by Prop. 4. but both Papists and Protestants do assent unto the antient Creeds; ergo, they are undivided in matters of faith.* And hath not *J. W.* now done his business, and very substantially proved the thing he intended? But I hope we may enjoy the benefit of it, as well as those of the *Church of Rome*; and that they will not henceforward charge us with dividing from their Church in any matters of faith, since we are all agreed in owning the antient Creeds, and seeing, we cannot be divided from the Church but by differing in matters of faith according to his *Propos.* it follows that we are still members of the true Church, and therefore neither guilty of *Heresy* nor *Schism*. But if those who do own and assent to the antient Creeds may yet be divided in matters of faith, as they charge us by rejecting the definitions of the *Roman Church*, then there

there is no shadow of a contradiction left in my charging them with *differences* in matters of faith among themselves, though I say, they own the *antient Creeds*.

And now, Reader, thou seest what all these pitiful cavils are come to; and what ground there hath been for them to glory in this *Puff-bello*, that *with a sheet and a half* hath compelled me, as he saith, *to be my own Executioner*. But these great *Heroes* must be allowed to relate their famous adventures, with some advantage to themselves: it might have been enough to have rescued the *Lady*, but not only to destroy the *Giant* (as any man must be accounted whom such *Knights* encounter) but to leave him grovelling in the ground and gasping for breath, and that by wounds he forced him to give himself, this is beyond measure glorious. Go thy way then for the *eighth Champion* of *Christendom*, enjoy the benefit of thy illustrious fame, sit down at ease, and relate to thy immortal honour thy mighty exploits; only when thou hast done, remember thou hast encountered nothing but the *wind-mills* of thy own imagination, and the man whom thou thought'st to have executed by his own hands, stands by and laughs at thy ridiculous attempts. But I forget, that I am so near his Conclusion, wherein he doth so gravely advise me *that I would be pleased for once to write Controversies,*

§. 9.
The Conclusion,
p. 14.

not

not Play-Books : his meaning I suppose, is, that I would return to the old beaten road, where they know how to find a man, and have something to say, because others have said something before them ; and not represent the ridiculous passages of their *Panaticks* ; for the defence of which they are furnisht with no Distinctions out of their usual Magazines, their present *Manuals of Controversie*. I shall be contented to wait their leisure, if they have any thing material to say ; as *J. W.* gives me some hopes, when he saith, *that other more learned pens (I shall be glad to see them) will give me a more particular and compleat answer.* I hope, not in the way of cavilling ; If they do, I shall hereafter only condemn them, but I am afraid of their good intentions by the Books he mentions as such considerable things in answer to my *Vindication of Archb. Land, viz. the Guide in Controversies, and Protestantism without Principles* ; if others write as they have done, I shall take as little notice of them, as I have done of those. Cannot a dull Book come out with *my name in the Title*, but I must be obliged to answer it ? no, I assure them I know better how to spend my time. I say still, let a just answer come forth, that deals by me as I did by the Book I answered, and then let them blame me, if I neglect it. But at last he gives one general reason why no great matter is to be expected to come abroad in Print : *not, but that they have men of learning*

learning among them: No doubt of it: but alas for them! they are so persecuted in the Printing-Houses, that nothing of theirs is suffered to come abroad, only by great good fortune this complaint is in Print and comes abroad openly enough. How long I pray have these dayes of persecution been? For, what ever you imagine I was so far *from having any hand in it*, that the first time I ever heard of it, was from your complaints. Have you not formerly complained thus, when Books too many have been Printed and published in *England*? And what assurance can you give us that you do not still complain without cause? But, not to suffer you to deceive the people any longer in this kind (by pretending that this is the reason why you do not answer our Books, because you have no liberty of the Press) I have at this time a Catalogue by me of above two hundred *Popish Books* Printed in our own language (which I shall produce on a just occasion) a considerable part whereof have been published within the compass of not many years. And yet *all possible efforts are used by us* (saith *J. W.*) *to hinder their Doctors from shewing* P. 14. *their learning*; this of late we must needs say, they have very sparingly done; but all the arts we have, cannot hinder some of them from shewing their *weakness*, as this *J. W.* hath very prodigally done in this *Pamphlet*.

AN
ANSWER
TO THE
BOOK,

Entituled,

Dr. Stillingfleet's *Principles* Considered.

Although I write no *Playes*, yet I hope
I may have leave to say the *scene* is
changed; for instead of the former
Sophister, one now comes forth in the
habit of a grave *Divine*, whom I shall treat
with the respect due to his appearance of
Modesty and Civility. I pass by therefore
all those unhandsome reflections in his Pre-
face, which I have not already answered in
mine; and come immediately to the main
Controversie between us, which I acknow-
ledge

S. I.
The occa-
sion of an-
nexing the
Principles.

ledge to be of so great importance as to deserve a sober debate. And the Controversy in short is this, Whether Protestants who reject the *Roman Churches Authority* and *Infallibility*, can have any sufficient Foundation to build their faith upon? This we affirm, and those of the Church of *Rome* confidently deny; and on this account do charge us with the want of Principles, *i. e.* sufficient grounds for our faith. But this may be understood two ways. 1. That we can have no certainty of our faith *as Christians* without their *Infallibility*. 2. Or that we can have no certainty of our faith *as Protestants* *i. e.* in the matters in debate between their Church and ours. These two ought carefully to be distinguished from each other: although the *Principles* I laid down, do reach to both these, yet that they were chiefly intended for the former, will appear by the occasion of adding them to the end of the Answer there given. The occasion was, my Adversaries calling for *Grounds* and *Principles*; upon which I there say, that I would give an account of the faith of Protestants in the way of Principles, and of the reason of our rejecting their impositions. The first I undertook on two accounts. 1. To shew that the *Roman Churches Authority* and *Infallibility* cannot be the Foundation of Christian faith

and so we may be very good Christians without having any thing to do with the Church of Rome. 2. That this might serve as a sufficient answer to a Book intitled *Protestants without Principles*. Which being in some part of it directed against me, I had reason, not only to lay down those *Principles*, but to do it in such a manner as did most directly overthrow the principles of that Book.

Which being only intimated there, I must now to make my proceeding more clear and evident, produce those assertions of *E.W.* for which mine were intended. In the first Chapter he designs to prove, *That all men must be infallible in the assent they give to matters of faith.* For, saith he, *If they disown such infallible believers, they must jointly deny all infallible faith* : and a little after, *an In-* Protestants without Principles, Chap. I.
fallible verity revealed to us forcibly requires an answerable and correspondent infallible faith in us : and therefore he asserts a *subjective Infallibility in true believers.* And from hence he proves *the necessity of Infallible* P. 17.
teachers ; for *infallible believers and infallible teachers*, he saith, *seem near correlatives.* P. 18.
 In the second Chapter he saith, *he that hears an infallible teacher hath the Spirit of truth,* P. 19.
and he that hears not an infallible teacher wants this Spirit of truth ; by which he does not mean an infallible Revealer of the doctrine P. 20.

- P. 21. doctrine at first; but the immediate teachers of the revealed doctrine, for, saith he, *no man can be a Heretick that denyes the objective verities revealed in Gods word, unless he be sure that his teacher reveals those verities infallibly.*
- P. 22. He proposes the objection of a Simplician, as he calls him, *that he builds his faith and Religion, not on any Preachers talk; but on the objective verities revealed in Scripture:* to which he answers, *that unless he first learn of some infallible Oracle, the sense of Scripture in controverted places, he can never arrive to the depth of Gods true meaning, or derive infallible faith from those objective revealed Verities.* He yet farther asserts, *that every Catechist, or Preacher that hath a lawful mission, and is sent by the infallible Church to teach Christs Sacred Doctrine, if he Preach that doctrine which Christ and his Church approves of, is then under that notion of a member conjoyned with an Infallible Church, infallible in his teaching:*
- P. 23. and thence concludes, *that infallibility doth accompany both teachers and hearers:*
- P. 24. *and from denying this Infallibility, he saith, follows an utter ruine of Christian Religion, yea, and of Scripture too.* And afterwards he goes about to prove, *that no man can have any divine faith without infallibility in the*
- P. 25. *proponent; for, saith he, as long as the Infallibility*
- P. 42, 43.

ability of a Revelation stands remote from me
 or want of an undoubted application made by
 an infallible Proponent, it can no more trans-
 fuse Certainty into Faith, than Fire at a great
 distance, warmth. This is the sum of the
 principles of that *Metaphysical* wit; but sure
 man must have his brains well confounded
 by *School Divinity* and hard words, before he
 can have common sense little enough to think
 he understands them. But because I never
 loved to spend time in confuting a man, who
 thinks himself the wiser for speaking things,
 which neither he nor any one else can under-
 stand; I rather chose in as short a way as I
 could, to put together such Propositions, as
 might give an account of *Christian Faith*
 without all this *Jargon* about Infallibility.
 In order to this, I first laid down the *Princi-
 ples* wherein all parties are agreed; and then
 such Propositions as I supposed would suffi-
 ciently give an account of our faith, without
 any necessity of such an infallibility as he
 makes necessary for the foundation of it.

But for our clearer proceeding in an Ar-
 gument of this importance, it will be necessary
 to state and fix the notion of *Infallibility* be-
 fore I come to particulars. For as it is used it
 seems to be a rare word for *Jugglers* in *Divini-
 ty* to play tricks with; for sometimes they apply
 it to the *object* that is believed, and call that

§ 23
 Of the no-
 tion of in-
 fallibility.

infallibly true; sometimes to the *subject* capable of believing, and say persons ought to be *infallibly certain* that what they believe is *infallibly true*; and sometimes to the *means* of conveying that infallible truth to the faculties of men, and these they say must be *infallible* or else there can be no *infallible certainty* of any thing as *infallibly true*. But the subtilty of these things lyes only in their obscurity; and the School-man is spoiled when his talk is brought down out of the clouds to common sense: I will therefore try to bring these things out of their terms to a plain meaning and surely we may speak and understand each other in these matters without this doubtful term of *Infallibility*. For if it signifies any thing, we may make use of the thing it signifies in stead of the word, and by applying the thing signified by it, to that which it is spoken of, we shall soon discern how justly it is attributed to it. *Infallible* is that which cannot be deceived; now if no one will say, That a *proposition cannot be deceived*, it is absurd to say that it is *infallibly true*; therefore the matters revealed considered as *objective verities* as our *School-man* speaks, are not capable of *Infallibility*; which cannot belong to the truth proposed, but to him that propounds or believes it. For *to be deceived* or *not to be deceived*, are proper only to persons; and the impossible

impossibility of being deceived does in truth
 belong only to an infinitely perfect understand-
 ing; for what ever understanding is imperfect,
 is of it self lyable to error and mistake. And
 yet an understanding lyable to be deceived may
 not be deceived, and be sure it is not. The
 highest assurance of not being deceived, is from
 Gods revealing any thing to men; for we
 know it impossible that God should be deceiv-
 ed, or go about to deceive mankind in what
 he obliges them to believe as true. This then
 is granted, that whatever any person speaks
 immediately from God, he cannot be deceiv-
 ed in it; but men may be deceived in think-
 ing they speak from God when they do not.
 There is then no difficulty in the first, that
 what ever persons are inspired by God are in-
 fallible in what they speak; but the main dif-
 ficulty is about the assurance which God gives
 to men that they are inspired. Two wayes it may
 be conceived that men cannot be deceived in
 this matter. 1. If God inspires every parti-
 cular person with the belief of this, and gives
 him such evidence thereof as cannot be false.
 Or if God shall inspire some persons in eve-
 ry Age to assure the World, that those before
 them were inspired: but notwithstanding this,
 particular persons may be deceived, in believ-
 ing those inspired who are not; and to pre-
 vent this, nothing can be sufficient but divine

revelation to every particular person that he
 hath appointed those *infallible Guides* in his
Church, to assure men that he had at first sent
 his *Church* by persons that were *infallible*;
 but then, why might not such a particular Re-
 velation assure men as well immediately than
 Christ and his holy Apostles were *infallible*;
 as that the *Guides* of the present *Church* are *in-*
fallible? For it is unconceivable that persons
 should be more infallible in judging the Inspi-
 ration of the present *Guides*, than of the first
 Founders of the *Church*. And supposing men
 not inspired, they may be deceived in believing
 this *infallibility* of the present *Church*, and
 they may be deceived, how can their Faith be
infallible? So that nothing can make the
 faith of particular persons infallible, but pri-
 vate inspiration which must resolve all Faith
 into *Enthusiasm* and immediate revelation.
 And nothing can be more absurd than to say
That there are infallible Believers without in-
fallible Inspiration; or that an *infallible Pro-*
ponent can transfuse infallibility into faith, un-
 less the infallibility of that Proponent be first
 made known to the Believer in such a way
 he cannot be deceived in. For in matters of
 divine Revelation, the main thing we are to
 enquire after, is the *infallibility* of those who
 delivered this doctrine to the World. And
 although the reason of believing what God says
 faith

faith, be his own infallibility, which is natural
 and essential to him; yet the reason of my as-
 senting to this or that doctrine, as coming from
 God, must be an assurance that God hath secu-
 red those persons from mistake whom he hath
 employed to make known the doctrine to the
 World. Those persons then whom God in-
 spired, are the *Proponents of matters of faith*
us: and if they give us sufficient reason to
 believe that they were inspired, we are bound
 to believe them, otherwise not. But to sup-
 pose that we cannot believe the first infallible
proponents, unless there be such in every Age,
 to make more difficulties, and to answer
 none. For then all my belief of the *infalli-*
bility of the *first Proponents*, must depend on
 the evidence which the *present Guides* of the
 Church give of their *infallibility*, who yet
 cannot pretend to the same evidence which
 they had: and here is no difficulty answered,
 for we are certainly bound as much to enquire
 into the reason of our believing the present
 guides of the Church *infallible*, as the Apo-
 stles: and if men cannot be infallible in be-
 lieving the *Apostles*, unless there be other in-
 fallible *Proponents* in every Age, to assure
 them that the Apostles were inspired, why
 must not the infallibility of these present *Pro-*
ponents be likewise so attested as well as of the
 apostles: and what undoubted application

can be made of the Churches *infallibility*, unless there be some other *infallible Proponent* still to *transfuse certainty into my belief* of that, by virtue of which, I must believe all other matters of Faith, which is the Churches *Infallibility*? So that the *last Proponent* must either be believed for himself without any further evidence, and then the shorter way would be to believe the first so, or else there will be an *endless infallibility*; or at last all must be resolved into the *Enthusiasm* of every particular person, if we do not rest satisfied with the *rational evidence* which those persons, who were inspired by God, did give to the World that they were sent by him; and then let the World judge whether *Christ* and his *Apostles* did not give stronger evidence that they were sent from God, than the *Pope* or the *Guides* of the present *Church* do? and if so, whether it be possible for men to do greater disservice to Christianity, than to suspend our belief of the *Inspiration* of the *Founders* of the *Christian Church*, on a thing, at least, far less evident than the thing to be believed by it is? but in plain English, on a thing notoriously false; and only the arrogant pretence of an usurping Faction which thinks it easier boldly to say that *it can not be deceived*, than to defend it self against the just accusations both of *deceiving*, and *being deceived*.

These things being premised, I now come to consider how far *N. O.* hath shewed the invalidity of the *Principles* laid down by me, for the end for which I intended them. The design of them was to shew, that we may have sufficient *Certainty* of our Faith, without the *Infallibility* of the *Roman Church*; the Answerer hath yielded some things and denied others. I shall therefore first lay down his *Concessions*, and see of what force they are to the issue of this Controversie, and then come fairly to debate the matter in difference between us.

I. For his Concessions.

1. He yields, *That there is no necessity at all of Infallibility under natural Religion*: which was implied in the second and third *Propositions* which are granted by him.

For in the second Proposition I assert, That *Prop. 2.* Man being framed a rational Creature capable of reflecting upon himself, may antecedently to any external Revelation certainly know the being of God, and his dependence upon him; else there could be no such thing as a Law of Nature, or any Principles of Natural Religion: *which, he saith, may be granted.*

All supernatural and external Revelation, *Prop. 3.* must suppose the truth of Natural Religion; for unless we be antecedently certain that there

is a God, and that we are capable of knowing him, it is impossible to be certain, that God hath revealed his Will to us by any supernatural means. *Let this be granted*, saith he. From whence it follows, that we have sufficient certainty of the Principles of Natural Religion, without any such thing as *Infallibility*.

2. He yields, *That Reason is to be judge concerning divine Revelation*; which appears by the next Proposition.

Prop. 4.

Nothing ought to be admitted for Divine Revelation, which overthrows the certainty of those Principles which must be antecedently supposed to all Divine Revelation: for that were to overthrow the means whereby we are to judge concerning the truth of any Divine Revelation. Of which, he saith, *Let this also be granted*.

3. He yields, *That the will of God may be sufficiently declared to men by writing*, for he grants the tenth Proposition, which is this,

Prop. 10.

If the Will of God cannot be sufficiently declared to men by writing, it must either be, because no writing can be intelligible enough for that end, or that it can never be known to be written by men infallibly assisted; the former is repugnant to common sense, for words are equally capable of being understood, spoken or written; the latter overthrows the possibility

sibility of the Scriptures being known to be the Word of God. *This, saith he, is granted.*

4. He yields, *That the written will of God doth contain all things simply necessary to salvation.* For in his consideration of the 14. Proposition, these are his words: *Meanwhile* P. 22. S. 15. *as touching the Perfection of holy Scriptures, Catholicks now, as the holy Fathers anciently, do grant that they contain all points, which are simply necessary to be of all persons believed for attaining salvation.*

5. He yields, *That no person is infallibly* P. 52. *certain of or in his Faith, because the Proponent thereof is infallible, unless he also certainly know, or have infallible evidence that he is infallible; only he adds, That for begetting an infallible assent to the thing proposed, it is sufficient if we have an infallible evidence either of the thing proposed, or of the Proponent only.* Which is all I desire as to this matter. But he quarrels with me for saying, Proposition 21. It is necessary therefore in order to an infallible assent, that every particular person be infallibly assisted, in judging of the matters proposed to be believed: *Because, saith he, it is not necessary to have an infallible evidence of the truth of the things proposed, i. e. from the internal principles that prove or demonstrate them; but it is enough that he have*

an infallible or sufficiently certain evidence only of the infallibility of the external Proponent. Where there are two things to be taken notice of. 1. That by the *matters proposed to be believed*, he would seem to understand me only of the things that are to be believed by vertue of any Proponent supposed infallible; whereas I meant it of all such things to which *an infallible assent* is required, and chiefly of that by which we are to believe the things revealed; as for instance, *that the Church is infallible*, is in the first place to be believed upon their principles, and either an *infallible assent* is required to this or not; if not, then *infallibility is not necessary to faith*; if it be, then this infallible assent must be built on an infallibility antecedent to that of the Church; and then my consequence necessarily follows, that the ground on which a necessity of some external infallible Proponent is asserted, must rather make every particular person infallible, if no divine Faith can be without an infallible assent, and so renders any other Infallibility useless.

2. That he explains *infallible evidence* by that which is *sufficiently certain*, which is meer shuffling: for he knows well enough that we contend for *sufficiently certain evidence* as much as they; our only Question is about *infallibility*, whether that be necessary or no? If *sufficiently certain evidence* will serve for
the

the Churches Infallibility, why may it not for the *Scriptures*, or any matters of Faith contained therein? If they mean no more by *Infallibility* but *sufficient certainty*, why do they make so great a noise about it, as though there could be no Faith and we no Christians without Infallibility? when we all say that the matters of Faith have *sufficient certainty*, nay, the highest which such things are capable of. Is *infallible Faith* come to be *sufficiently certain* only? for all that I know an *infallible* Popemay by such another explication become like one of us.

6. He yields, *That a right and saving faith may be without an infallible assurance concerning the Churches Infallibility.* which, he P. 54. faith, is abundantly declared by *Catholick Writers*. I only desire to know, why a like right and saving faith may not be had concerning the *Scriptures*, without their *Churches* infallibility? For from hence it follows, that an *infallible assent* is not requisite to saving faith; directly contrary to my former Adversary E. W. for one faith, *it is necessary to faith*, and the other, *that it is not*. But above all, how will he ever answer this to Mr. J. S. who hath written a whole Book purposely against this Principle, as impious and atheistical? Methinks this way of defending the main foundation of their Faith by Principles so directly contra-

contradicting one another looks a little scandalously, and brings an odd suspicion upon their Cause, as if it were very hard to be made good, when our Adversaries cannot agree by which of two quite contrary Principles it was best be maintained.

7. He yields, *That the utmost assurance a man can have of the Churches Infallibility, is only moral*; but to make it up, he calls it a *moral infallibility*; which, how strangely soever it sounds, yet his meaning is good; for it is such an infallibility, as is not infallibility. Hath the dispute been thus long among us, whether *infallibility* be necessary or no to faith, and now at last one comes and tells us, Yes surely, a *moral infallibility* is necessary. I have heard of a hot dispute between two Gentlemen about *Transubstantiation*, very earnest they were on both sides; at last another falls into their company and asked them what it was they were about; they told him *Transubstantiation*: very well, said he, but I pray tell me what you mean by it; one said it was *standing* at the Eucharist, and the other *kneeling*. Much such another explication is this here of *Infallibility*, only this is somewhat worse, for it is joyning two words together which destroy each other; for if it be only *moral Certainty*, it is not *infallible*; if it be *infallible*, it cannot be barely *moral*. I expect to hear shortly of an accidental

dental Transubstantiation, a co-ordinate Supremacy, as well as a *moral Infallibility*. But we are to suppose that by *Infallibility* he means no more than *Certainty*, because he explains it by the *Certainty of universal Tradition*: this were well enough, if in the precedent Page he had not said, *That a particular person may* P. 55. *be infallible in the assent he gives to some matter proposed, viz. to this, that the Church is infallible*; I would fain understand what this *infallible assent* is grounded upon, and if the evidence be only *sufficiently or morally infallible*, which are his own terms, how the *assent* which is built upon it, comes to be more than so. It is very pleasant to observe how Mr. Cressley, and some other late writers of their Church are perplexed about this word *Infallibility*, as if they had a Wolf by the ears, they cannot tell how to hold it, and they are afraid to let it go. And very loth is our N. O. to part with the sound of *Infallibility*, although his own Concessions perfectly overthrow it, as will yet further appear by this last, viz.

8. *That moral Certainty is a sufficient foundation for Faith.* This will appear by my 27. Proposition, which is this: The nature of certainty doth receive several names either according to the nature of the proof, or the degrees of the Assent. Thus Moral Certainty may

Prop. 27.

may be so called, either as it is opposed to Mathematical evidence, but implying a firm assent upon the highest evidence that Moral things can receive : Or as it is opposed to a higher degree of Certainty in the same kind, so Moral Certainty implies only greater Probabilities of one side than the other. In the former sense we assert the certainty of Christian Faith to be Moral, but not only in the latter. To which he saith, *This Principle is granted, if importing only that Christians have or may have a sufficiently certain and infallible evidence of the truth of their Christianity.* Whereby it is plain that though he useth the term *infallible*, yet he means no more than I do, or else he ought not to have brought that as an explication of my principle which is contrary to it, as in this Controversie, *Moral Certainty* is opposed to strict demonstration and Infallibility. But if he by *infallibility* means only *sufficient certainty*, I shall be content for quietness sake, that he shall call it *Infallibility*, if he pleases. And that he can mean no more by it, appears not only by what he hath said before, but by what he saith afterwards in these words. *A Natural or Moral Certainty (though not such a one as cannot possibly be false, but which according to the Laws of Nature and the common manners and experience of Men is not false) is sufficient on*
which

P. 67.

P. 94.

which to ground such a faith as God requires of
 us; in respect of that Certainty which can be
 derived from humane sense or reason, and
 which serves for an introductive to the reliance
 of this our faith upon such Revelation as is believ-
 ed by us divine; and which if divine, we know
 is not possibly fallible; In respect of its relying
 on which Revelation, an infallible object, and
 not for an Infallible Certainty as to the sub-
 ject, it is that this our Faith is denominated a
 Divine Faith. Now this Natural or Moral
 Certainty is thought sufficient for the first ra-
 tional Introductive and Security of our Faith;
 not only by the Doctor in his 27. Principle,
 but also by Catholick Divines in their Discour-
 ses of the Prudential Motives. Very well
 said, and I were a very desingenuous man, if I
 should not heartily thank him for so free a
 Confession, by which, if I understand any
 thing, he very fairly gives up the Cause of In-
 fallibility, as to the necessity of it in order to
 Faith: As will easily appear by the managing
 of it, so far as I have been concerned in it.
 It is evident to any one that will cast an eye on
 the Controversie of Infallibility, between the
 Arch-bishop and his Adversaries, that it was
 raised on this account, because those of the
 Church of Rome asserted, that the Infallible
 Testimony of the Church was necessary in or-
 der to the believing the Scriptures to be the
 Word

Word of God : and so much is endeavoured to be defended by him who pretended to answer my Lord of *Canterburies* Book, who goes upon this Principle, *That this is to be believed with a divine Faith, and a divine Faith must be built upon an infallible Testimony*; the falsehood of which, I at large shewed in the Discourse of the Resolution of Faith. Since the publishing whereof, the Metaphysical Gentleman before mentioned, pretended to answer that part of it which concerns *Infallibility* and *Moral Certainty*. Some of his Assertions I have laid down already, as contrary to this of *N. O.* as may be; for he not only asserts the necessity of *Infallibility* for a foundation of *Christian Faith*, but spends some Chapters in rambling talk against *Moral Certainty*. The Title of one of which is, *Faith only Morally Certain is no Faith*. I desire *N. O.* and *E. W.* to agree better before they goe about to confute me; and to what purpose should I trouble my self with answering a man whose Principles the more ingenuous of their own Party disown, as well as we? For not only *N. O.* heremakes *Moral Certainty* a sufficient ground for *Divine Faith*, but the Guide in Controversies, another of my Adversaries, asserts the same, when he saith, *And indeed from what is said formerly, that a Divine Faith may be had by those who have had no extrin-*

Prot. with-
out Princip.
chap. 6.

Guide in
Controv.
dis. 5 chap.
10. S. 134.

extrinsecal even morally infallible (I see now from whom N. O. learnt these terms) motive thereof, it follows that Divine Faith doth not resolve into such motives either as the formal cause, or alwayes as the applicative introductive, or condition of this divine faith. And a little after, That it is not necessary that such Faith alwayes should have an external rationally infallible ground or motive thereto (whether Church Authority or any other) on his part that so believes. By these concessions it appears that the cause of *Infallibility*, as far as it concerns the necessity of it in order to Faith, is clearly given up by these persons; and if others be still of another mind among them, I leave them to dispute it among themselves.

Thus far then we are agreed; I now come to consider where the controversie still remains, and why the rest of my *Principles* may not pass as well as these. In order to this, I must, by taking a view of his several exceptions and answers, draw together a *Scheme* of those *Principles* which he sets up in opposition to mine; and if I do not very much mistake, they may be reduced to these three.

1. That God hath given an infallible assistance to the Guides of the Church in all Ages of it, for the direction of those who live in it.

2. That without this infallible assistance there

Sec. 135i

§: 42

N. O's
Principles
laid down.

there can be no certainty of the sense of Scripture.

3. That all the Arguments which overthrow the Churches Infallibility, do destroy the Churches Authority.

These, as far as I can perceive, contain the whole force of his *Considerations*; and in the examination of these the remaining discourse must be spent; In which I shall have occasion to take notice of whatever is material in his Book.

1. The main controversie is, whether God hath given an infallible assistance to the Guides of the Church in all Ages, for the conduct of those who live in it? For if he hath not, my Adversary cannot deny, but the *Principles* laid down by me must hold. For in case there be no infallibility in the Guides of the Church, every one must be left to the use of his own understanding, proceeding in the best manner, to find out what the Will of God is in order to salvation. We do not now dispute concerning the best helps for a person to make use of in a matter of this nature; but the Question is, whether a man ought to resign his own judgement to that of the Church, which pretends to be infallible as to all necessities for salvation: or supposing no such infallibility, whether a person using his Faculties in the best manner about the sense of *Scriptures*, with the helps of
divine

divine Grace, may not have sufficient certainty thereby what things are required of him in order to happiness? Hereby I exclude nothing that may tend to the right use of a mans understanding in these things, whether it be the direction of Pastors, the decrees of Councils, the sense of the Primitive Church, or the care, industry, and sincerity of the Enquirer; but supposing all these, whether by not believing the Guides of the Church to be infallible, *the foundation of this persons faith can be nothing else but a trembling Quicksand,* as N. O. speaks in his Preface; only from the supposing *an errability in the Guides of Gods Church.* And a little after he layes down that as his fundamental Principle, *that the only certain way not to be misled will be the submitting our internal assent and belief to Church Authority;* or as he elsewhere speaks *to the infallible Guideship of Church Governors.* Here P. 17. then two Questions necessarily arise: 1. Whether there can be no certainty of Faith without this infallibility? 2. What certainty there is of this infallibility?

1. Whether there can be no certainty of Faith without *Infallibility* in the Guides of the Church, and submitting our internal assent and belief to them? For the clearing of this we must consider what things are agreed upon between us, that by them we may

proceed to the resolution of this Question.

1. It is I suppose agreed, That every man hath in him a faculty of discerning of truth and falshood.

2. That this Faculty must be used at least in the choice of the infallible Guide ; for otherwise a man must be abused with every pretence of Infallibility, and *George Fox* may as well be followed as the Pope of *Rome* ; and to what purpose are all prudential motives and arguments for Infallibility, if a man must not judge whether they be good or no; *i.e.* sufficient to prove the thing.

3. That God is not wanting in necessities to the salvation of mankind.

4. That the Books of Scripture received on both sides do contain in them the Will of God in order to salvation.

5. That all things simply necessary to salvation are contained therein, which is a concession mentioned before.

S. 5.
N. O's exceptions
answered.

These things being supposed, the Question now is, Whether a person not relying on the infallibility of a Church, may not be certain of those things which are contained in those Books in order to Salvation ? For of those our present enquiry is, and not about the sense of the more difficult and controverted places ; and if we can make it appear that men may be cer-

tain

tain as to matters of salvation without infallibility, let them prove (if they can) the necessity of infallibility for things which are not necessary to salvation. But of the sense of *Scripture* in those things afterwards; I now enquire into the certainty men may attain to, of *the necessities to salvation in Scripture*: and concerning this, I laid down this Proposition.

Although we cannot argue against any particular way of Revelation from the necessary Attributes of God, yet such a way as writing being made choice of by him, we may justly say, that it is repugnant to the nature of the design and the Wisdom and Goodness of God to give infallible assistance to persons in writing his Will for the benefit of Mankind, if those Writings may not be understood by all persons who sincerely endeavour to know the meaning of them in all such things as are necessary for their salvation. Prop. 13,

This Principle, he saith, *is unsound*; which, P. 13. if he can prove, I may have more reason to question it than I yet have. And I assure him I expect no mean proofs to shake my belief of a principle of so great importance to the Christian Religion. For it being granted by him, *that all things simply necessary to salvation, are contained in the Books of Scripture*, I desire to know whether *things simply necessary*

G 3

ought

ought not to be delivered with greater plainness than things which are not so? Whether God appointing the Evangelists and Apostles to write these things, did not intend that they should be so expressed as they might most easily be understood? Whether our Saviours own Sermons were capable of being understood by those who heard them, without some infallible Interpreter? Whether the Evangelists did not faithfully deliver our Saviours Doctrine? If they did, how that comes to be obscure now, which was plain then? so that either Christ himself must be charged with not speaking the Will of God plainly, or the Evangelists cannot be charged with not expressing it so. There are no other Books in the World that I know of, that need an infallible Interpreter: and we can tell certainly enough what any other Religion requires, supposing it to be written in the same way that the Christian is: Is it not possible for a man to be certain what the Law of *Moses* required of the People of *Israel*, by reading the Books of that Law, without some infallible Guides? Do the ten Commandments need an *Infallible Comment*? Or can we have now no certainty of the meaning of the *Levitical Law*, because there is no High Priest or Sanhedrin to explain it? And if it be possible to understand the necessities of that dark dispensation in comparison

son with the Gospel, are our eyes now blinded with too much light ? Is not Christianity therefore highly recommended to us in the New Testament, because of the clearness and perspicuity wherein the Doctrines and Precepts thereof are delivered ? And yet after all this, cannot the most necessary parts of it, be understood by those who sincerely endeavour to understand them ? By which sincere endeavour we are so far from excluding any useful helps, that we alwayes suppose them. The sum then of what he is to confute, is this, that although the Apostles and Evangelists did deliver the Mind of God to the World in their Writings, in order to the salvation of Mankind, although they were inspired by an infinite Wisdom for this end, although all things simply necessary to Salvation are contained in their Writings, although a Person useth his sincere endeavour by all Moral helps, and the Divine Grace assisting him to find out in these Writings the things necessary to Salvation, yet after all he cannot certainly understand the meaning of them. Which to me appears so absurd and monstrous a Doctrine, so contrary to the honour of the Scriptures and the design of Christianity, that if I had a mind to disparage it, I would begin with this, and end with Transubstantiation. For in earnest Sir, did not our Saviour speak intelligibly in matters of

so great importance to the Salvation of Mankind? Did he not declare all that was necessary for that end, in his many admirable discourses? Did not the Evangelists record his words and actions in writing, and that as one of them saith expressly,

Joh. 20. 31.

That we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through his name? And after all this, cannot we understand so much as the common necessities to salvation by the greatest and most sincere endeavour for that end? But it is time now to consider his exceptions against this Principle: which are these.

P. 13.

1. *That God may reveal his mind so in Scripture, as that in many things it may be clear only to some persons more versed in the Scriptures, and in the Churches Traditional sense of them, and more assisted from above according to their imployment; which persons he hath appointed to instruct the rest.* But what is all this to our purpose? our Question is not about *may be's*, and possibilities of things, but it is taken for granted on both sides, that God hath revealed his mind in writing; therefore he need not make the supposition of *no writings at all*, as he doth afterwards: The Question is, Whether these Writings being allowed

P. 14.

owed for divine revelations of the Will of
 God, he hath expressed the necessities to sal-
 vation clearly therein or not? That God may
 deliver his mind obscurely in many things, is
 no question; nor that he may inspire persons
 to unfold his mind, where it is obscure; but
 our question is, Whether or no these Writings
 being acknowledged to contain the Will of
 God, it be agreeable with the nature of the
 design and the Wisdom and Goodness of God
 for such Writings not to be capable of being
 understood in all things necessary to salvation,
 by those who sincerely endeavour to understand
 them? But when I had expressly said, *things*
necessary for salvation, why doth he avoid
 that which the dispute was about, and only
 say *many things* in stead of it? I do not doubt
 but there are many difficult places of Scripture,
 as there must be in any antient Writings pen-
 ned in an Idiom so very different from ours.
 But I never yet saw one difficulty removed by
 the pretended Infallible Guides of the Church;
 all the help we have had, hath been from meer
 fallible men of excellent skill in Languages,
 History, and Chronology, and of a clear un-
 derstanding; and we should be very unthank-
 ful not to acknowledge the great helps we
 have had from them, for understanding the
 difficult places of Scripture: But for the *In-*
fallible Guides, they have dealt by the obscu-
 rities

Luke 10.
31, 32.

Mat. 23.
29.

rities of Scripture, *as the Priest and the Levite* in our Saviours Parable, did by the *wounded man*, they have *fairly passed them by*, and taken no care of them. If these Guides did believe themselves infallible, they have made the least use of their Talent that ever men did; they have laid it up in a Napkin, and buried it in the earth, for nothing of it ever appeared above ground. How could they have obliged the World more, (nay, it had been necessary to have done it for the use of their Gift) than to have given an Infallible sense of all controverted Places; and then there had been but one dispute left, whether they were infallible or not? but now, supposing we believe their Infallibility, we are still as far to seek, for the meaning of many difficult places. And supposing God had once bestowed this Gift of Infallibility upon the Guides of the Church, he might most justly deprive them of it, because of the no use they have made of it; and we might have great reason to believe so from our Saviour words, *To him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.* So that not making use of this Talent of Infallibility, gives us just reason to question, whether God continues it, supposing he had once given it to the Guides of the Church, since the Apostles days: which I see no reason to believe.

2. His next exception is from a saying of Dr. *Fields*, who, he saith, *seems to advance a* P. 14.
contrary Principle in his Preface to his Books
of the Church. But O the mischief of Com-
 mon-place-Books! which make men write
 what they find, and not what is to their pur-
 pose. For after all, Dr. *Field* doth but seem
 to advance another Principle in his opinion,
 and doth not so much as seem to do it in mine.
 For that learned and judicious Writer sets
 himself purposely to disprove the Infallibility
 of the Church in the beginning of his fourth
 Book; and is it probable that any man of com-
 mon understanding would assert that in his
 Preface, which he had disproved in his Book?
 It is a known distinction in the Church of
 Rome of the Church Virtual, representative
 and essential; by the two first are meant
 Popes and Councils; and of these two,
 Dr. *Field* saith, *that they may erre in matters* Field of
the Church
L. 4. ch. 15.
P. 350.
of greatest Consequence; yet these are N. O's.
 infallible Guides, whose conduct he supposeth
 men obliged to follow, and to yield their in-
 ternal assent to. Concerning the essential
 Church, he saith, *That it either comprehends* Ch. 2.
all the faithful that are and have been since
Christ appeared in the flesh; and then, he
 saith, *it is absolutely free from all error and*
ignorance of divine things, that are to be
known by Revelation; or as it comprehends
 only

only all those Believers that are and have been since the Apostles times ; and in this sense, in faith, the whole Church may be ignorant in sundry things , which are not necessary to salvation ; but he thinks it impossible for the whole Church to err in any thing of this nature. But in things that cannot be clearly deduced from the Rule of Faith, and word of divine and heavenly Truth, we think it possible, that all that have written of such things might err and be deceived. But if the Church be taken only as it comprehends the Believers that now are, and presently live in the world, in faith, it is certain and agreed upon , that in things necessary to be known and believed expressly and distinctly, it never is ignorant, much less doth err. Yea, in things that are not absolutely necessary to be known and believed expressly and distinctly , we constantly believe that this Church can never err , nor doubt pertinaciously, but that there shall ever be some found ready to embrace the truth, if it be manifested to them, and such as shall not wholly neglect the search and enquiry after it, as times and means give leave. But if we mean by the Church, any particular Church, he determines That particular men and Churches may err damnably , because notwithstanding others may worship God aright ; but that the whole Church at one time cannot so err , for that

then the Church should cease utterly for a time,
 and so not be Catholick being not at all times;
 and Christ should sometimes be without a
 Church; yet, that errors not prejudicing the
 Salvation of them that erre may be found in
 the Church, that is at one time in the world, we
 make no doubt; only the Symbolical and Ca-
 tholick which is and was being wholly free from
 error. Which several expressions amount to
 no more than this, that there will be al-
 ways some true Christians in the World;
 but what is this to infallible Teachers and
 Guides, in a Church that pretends to be Ca-
 tholick against all the sense and reason in the
 World? And is it now imaginable after all
 this, that Dr. Field should make any particu-
 lar Church infallible? No, all that he means
 in his Preface, is this, that among all the So-
 cieties of men, persons who have not leisure or
 capacity to examine particular Controversies,
 ought diligently to search which is the true
 Church, and having done this, to embrace
 her communion, follow her directions, and rest
 in her judgment, i. e. Suppose a man by that
 every Book of Dr. Fields should be convinced
 that the Church of Rome is a very corrupt and
 tyrannical Church, and the Church of Eng-
 land is a sound and good Church (which was
 the design of his writing it,) he being thus far
 satisfied, ought to embrace the communion of
 this

this Church, and so follow her directions, and rest in her judgment, so, as not to forsake her communion for any cavils that are raised about particular Controversies of which he is not a capable judge. And doth this make the Church of England infallible? If we say that a man being first satisfied of the skill and integrity of a Lawyer, ought to follow his directions, and rest in his judgment; doth this make that Lawyer infallible? so we say here, the resting in the judgment of a Church, of whose integrity we have assurance before-hand, implies only the supposition of so much honesty and skill in a Church, as may overrule the Judgments of persons who either have not leisure or capacity to understand particular Controversies which require skill in Languages, search into the Fathers and later Writers on both sides. If we say, that unlearned persons ought in such things to trust the learned whose integrity they have no ground to suspect, this doth not certainly make the more learned infallible? But we may rest in the judgment of those whom we have no reason to suspect, though we believe them not to be infallible: and it was the former Dr. Field meant, and by no means any infallibility, unless he plainly contradict himself.

17. 15.

3. He excepts, *That this brings in an infallibility of every particular Christian in all points*

points necessary, if such Christians will, that is;
 if only they shall sincerely endeavour to know
 the meaning of them. The force of this Argu-
 ment will be easily discerned if we put another
 parallel to it, viz. That they who assert from
 Scripture the assistance of Divine Grace to
 the sincere endeavours of men, do make all
 men impeccable if they will; as well as those
 who assert, that God will not be wanting in
 necessaries to salvation to those who sincerely
 endeavour to know them, make all such men
 so far infallible, if they will. If any one thing
 be plain in Scripture, the goodness of God is;
 and who can believe that, and yet think that
 he will suffer those who sincerely endeavour to
 know what is necessary to their salvation,
 not to understand it? But besides, how often
 both the Scripture promise a greater degree of
 knowledge to the meek and humble, to the Psal. 25. 9.
 diligent and industrious; to those that ask James 1. 5.
 and seek wisdom from him, to those that do Luke 11.
 the will of God; to whom our Saviour hath 13.
 expressly promised, that they shall know of his John 7. 17.
 doctrine, whether it be of God or no? And
 if this be the inerrability he means, he sees
 what grounds we have to assert it. But we
 understand not by it, that such persons cannot
 err in their judgments about what things are
 necessary, and what not; nor that they cannot
 err in other things which are not so necessary
 to

to salvation; but that Gods goodness is so great, and his promises so plain, and his word so clear in necessary things, that no one who sincerely endeavours to know them, shall ever miss of salvation. And if such an infallibility will satisfy them, we do not deny it to Popes themselves, or other Guides of the Church, on condition they do not think themselves infallible beyond these bounds; for they are only the meek and humble whom God hath promised to teach his way, and not such who will be infallible whether God will or no.

His other exceptions from *this principle destroying Church-Authority, from the parity of reason for Church Governours, and the contraverted places of Scripture* shall be considered afterwards.

§. 6.
N. O's.
Proofs of
Infallibility
examined.

2. I now come to examine what certainty there is for this Infallibility? Here I shall lay down some principles of common reason, by which we may better understand the force of his arguments.

1. That the Proof ought always to be more evident than the thing that is to be proved by it. For otherwise it is of no advantage to the proof of it, if it have but the same degree of evidence; but is a great prejudice to it, if it have less: so that if the proofs of Infallibility be equally obscure and difficult with those

those things which are to be believed by virtue of it, this Infallibility is of no use; but if they be less evident, the pretence of it is both very ridiculous and prejudicial to the Christian Faith.

2. The greater concernment any Law is of, and the greater danger in mistaking the meaning of it, the more plain and distinct ought the terms of that Law to be. As a Law about the succession of the Crown ought to be framed with all the clearness and distinctness imaginable, because the peace and security of a Nation depends upon it. So in case Christ hath appointed any Successor in the Government of his Church, or entailed Infallibility upon the Guides of it: this being a matter of such infinite concernment to the whole Church; it is most unreasonable to conceive that whatever other parts of his Will were obscure, those which relate to the matter of Succession and Infallibility, should be so; but rather so plain, that no one can miss of understanding them, because the weight of all the rest depends upon these two; and it is so horrible a presumption in any to pretend to them, in case they have no right to them, and the danger so great in relying upon them if there be no such thing.

3. A Law of such universal concernment to the Faith and Peace of the Christian Church

H

being

being supposed, the practice of the best and purest Ages of the Church must be supposed agreeable thereto, *i. e.* that in all matters of difference they did constantly own these infallible Judges, by appealing to them for a final issue of all debates, and resting satisfied with their decisions. But if on the contrary, when great differences have happened in and nearest the first times, no such Authority was made use of, but other wayes put in practice to make an end of them; if when it was pretended, it was slighted and rejected; nay, if the persons pretending it, were proceeded against and condemned, and this not by a popular Faction, but by just and legal Authority; we may thence conclude, that such Judges have arrogated that power to themselves, which was not given them by the Supream Legislator. These things being premised, I come to his particular Arguments, which lye scattered up and down; but to give them the greater strength, I shall bring them nearer together. And they are drawn either from *Scripture*, or *Tradition*, or *parity of Reason*.

I. *From Scripture*. And in truth the only satisfactory Argument in a matter of so great concernment to the Christian Church, ought only to be drawn from thence, unless we will suppose the Scripture defective in the most important things. For this being pleaded as a thing

thing necessary for the Peace of the Church
 by some, and for the Faith of Christians by
 others; so much greater the necessity of it is,
 so much clearer ought the evidence of it to be
 in Scripture, supposing that to be intended to
 reveal the Will of God to us in matters of
 the greatest necessity. But it cannot be de-
 nied by our Adversaries, that the places pro-
 duced by them for a constant Infallibility in
 the Guides of the Church, do not necessarily
 prove it; because they are very capable of
 being understood, as to the Infallibility only
 of the Apostles in the first Age and Founda-
 tion of the Christian Church: is it then to be
 imagined, that if Christ had intended such an
 Infallibility as the foundation of the Faith and
 Peace of his Church, he would not have de-
 livered his mind more plainly and clearly than
 he is pretended to do in this matter? How
 easily might all the contentions of the Chri-
 stian World have been prevented, if Christ
 had caused it to be delivered in terms so clear,
 as the nature of the thing doth require? If he
 had said, *I do promise my Infallible Spirit to*
the Guides of the Church in all Ages, to give
the true sense of Scripture in all controversies
which shall arise among Christians, and I ex-
pect an obedience suitably to all their determi-
nations: or, more particularly, I appoint the
Bishops of Rome in all Ages for my Successors in

the Government of the Church, who shall be the standing and infallible Judges of all Controversies among Christians; this dispute might never have happened among us. For we assure them that we account the peace of the Church so valuable a thing, and obedience to Christs Commands so necessary a duty, that we are well enough inclined to embrace the doctrine of Infallibility, if we could see any ground in Scripture for it. But we cannot make persons infallible by believing them to be so, but we may easily make our selves fools, as others have done, by believing it without reason. The controversie then is not, whether Infallibility in the Guides of the Church be a desirable thing or not, for so we say impeccability is too; but the question is, whether there be any such thing promised by Christ to the Guides of his Church, and whether all Christians on that account are bound to yield their internal assent, as well as external obedience to all their decrees? which we deny, and desire to see it clearly proved from his words who alone could grant this Infallibility.

For if an infallible Judge be therefore necessary, because the Scripture is not sufficiently clear for the ending of Controversies, and that God hath actually constituted such a Judge, cannot be proved but by Scripture, surely we

have

have all the reason in the World to expect that the Scripture should be abundantly, and beyond all contradiction clear in this point, to make amends for its obscurity in the rest: For if this Point be not clearly proved, we are never the nearer an end of Controversies: because the business stops at the very head, and they may beg their hearts out, before we shall ever be so good natured as to grant it them without proof. And they who have been so bold (shall I say: or blasphemous) as to charge our Lord with *want of discretion*, in case he have not provided his Church with such an Infallible Judge, do certainly render him much more obnoxious to this imputation, in supposing him to have constituted such a Judge, if he have no where plainly declared that he hath done so. And let them, if they can, produce one clear Text of Scripture to this purpose, which by the unanimous consent of the Fathers is so interpreted; and which, to the common sense of Mankind, is more sufficiently clear for the ending this Controversie, than the Scripture is said by them to be in other necessary Points of Faith. And till they have done this, according to their own way of arguing, we have as much reason to deny their Infallibility, as they have to demand our assent to it, upon the presumed obscurity and insufficiency of Scripture.

6. 7.
Of the
Arguments
from Scri-
pture for
Infallibi-
lity.

P. II. 25,
26.

Deut. 17.
10, 11, 12.
2 Chron. 19.
10.

Rational
Account.
p. 1. b. 8.
left. 2. p.
239.

When I came thus prepared to find what the Considerator would produce in a matter of such consequence, I soon discerned how little mind he had to insist upon any proofs of that, which is his only Engine to overthrow my Principles. For after the most diligent search I could make, the only Argument from *Scripture* I found produced, was from the Old Testament, (where I confess I least looked for it) but however, this is thought so considerable as to be twice produced; and yet is so unlucky, that if I understand any thing of the force of it, it proves the Judges in *Westminster Hall* to be infallible, rather than the Pope, or any Guide of the Christian Church. For the force of the Argument lyes in *Gods appointing Judges under the Law*, according to whose sentence matters were to be determined, upon penalty of death in case of disobedience. But what then? doth this imply Infallibility? no, that he dares not stand to, but absolute obedience; which we are ready to yield when we see the like absolute command for Ecclesiastical Judges of Controversies of Religion, as there was among the *Jews* for their supream Judges in matters of Law. But of this place I have already spoken at large, and shewed how impertinently it is produced for Infallibility in the Book, he often refers to, and might, if he had thought fit, have answered what is there said,

said, before he had urged it again, without any new strength added to it.

But since he produces no other proof for it, I must consider how he goes about to weaken mine against it. Two things I insisted upon against such a pretence of Infallibility, *viz.* That such a pretence implying an infallible Assistance of the Spirit of God, there were but two ways of proving it, either, 1. By such miracles as the Apostles wrought to attest their infallibility, or 2. By those *Scriptures* from whence this Infallibility is derived. Concerning both these I laid down two Propositions.

1. Concerning the Proof by *miracles*. The Proposition was this,

There can be no more intolerable usurpation on the Faith of Christians, than for any Person or Society of men to pretend to an Assistance as Infallible in what they propose, as was in Christ or his Apostles, without giving an equal degree of evidence that they are so assisted as Christ and his Apostles did, *viz.* by miracles as great, publick, and convincing as theirs were; by which I mean such as are wrought by those very persons who challenge this Infallibility, and with a design for the conviction of those who do not believe it. Prop. 16.

To this he answers: 1. *That I am equally* P. 27. 1
obliged to produce miracles for the Churches
Infallibility in Fundamentals, which I had

asserted in the defence of the Archbishop. But this admits a very easie answer; for when I speak of Infallibility in Fundamentals, I there declare that I mean no more by it, than that there shall be alwayes a number of true Christians in the World. And what necessity is there now of miracles for men to believe, since they receive the doctrine of the Gospel upon those miracles by which it was at first attested. Neither is there any need of miracles to shew that any number of men are not guilty of an actual error in what they believe, supposing they declare to believe only on the account of that divine Revelation which is owned by Christians; for in this case the tryal of doctrine is to be by Scripture. But in case any persons challenge an Infallibility to themselves antecedently to the belief of Scriptures, and by vertue of which, they say, men must believe the Scriptures, then I say such persons are equally bound to prove their infallibility by miracles as the Apostles were.

2. Not resting in this, he proceeds to another answer, the sum of which is, *That the Infallibility of the Church not being so large or so high as the Apostles, but consisting only in the Infallible delivery of the same doctrine there is no necessity of miracles in the present Church.* To this I answer, That the doctrine of the Gospel may be said to be new two wayes

1. In respect of the matter contained in it, and so it was new only when it was first revealed. 2. In respect of the person who is to believe it : so it is new in every age to those who are first brought to believe it. Now the Apostles had their infallibility attested by miracles, not barely with a respect to the revelation of new matter, for then none would have needed miracles but Christ himself, or the Apostles that made the first Sermons; for afterwards the matter was not new, but the necessity of miracles was to give a sufficient motive to believe, to all those to whom the Gospel was proposed; and therefore miracles are said to be a *sign to unbelievers*. For by these, Unbelievers were convinced that there was sufficient ground for receiving the doctrine of the Gospel on the Authority of those who delivered it; *God himself bearing them witness with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost*. Suppose then, any of the Apostles after their first preaching continued only to inculcate the same doctrine for the conversion of more Unbelievers; in this case the evidence of miracles was the reason of relying on the Authority of those persons for the truth of the Doctrine delivered by them. From whence it follows, that where the Christian Faith is to be received on the Authority of any persons in any Age, those persons ought

1 Cor. 14.

22.

Heb. 2. 4.

ought to confirm that Authority by miracles, as the Apostles did. For without this, there can be no such Authority whereon to rely, antecedently to the embracing the Christian Faith. Now, this is the case of the Church of *Rome*; they pretend not to deliver any Doctrine wholly new, but what was one way or another delivered by Christ and his Apostles; (although we therein charge them with fraud and falshood) but yielding this, yet they contend that no man can have sufficient ground for believing the Word of God, but from their Churches Infallibility; in this case it is plain that they make their Churches Infallibility to be as much the reason of persons believing, as the Infallibility of the Apostles in their time was; and therefore I say, they ought to prove this Infallibility in the same way, and by miracles, as great, publick, and convincing, as the Apostles did. 3. Yet he is very loth to let go the miracles of their Church, done in later times as well as formerly. It would be too large a task in this place to examine the miracles of the *Roman Church*, (that may be better done on another occasion,) all that I have here to say is, that all the miracles pretended among them, signify nothing to our present purpose, unless those miracles give evidence of the Authority and Infallibility of those by whom they were done;

done; and they would do well to shew, where
 ever in Scripture God did bestow a gift of
 miracles upon any but for this end: and what
 reason there is that God should alter the me-
 thod and course of his providence, in a matter
 of so great concernment to the Faith of Man-
 kind. Such miracles as were wrought by
 Christ and his Apostles we desie all other Re-
 ligions in the World to produce any like them
 to confirm their Doctrine; but such as the
 Church of *Rome* pretends, scarce any Religion
 in the World but hath pretended to the same.
 And for his most credible Histories he vouches
 for them, I hope he doth not mean *the Church*
History written by S. C. nor any other such
Legends among them; if he doth, I assure
 him they have a very easie Faith that think
 them credible. And if *all miracles* that are so
 called by those among whom they are done,
 be an Argument, as he saith, *of the security of*
salvation in the Communion and Faith of that
Church wherein they are done, I hope he will
 be so just, to allow the same to the *Arrians*,
Novatians, *Donatists*, and others, who all
 pretend to *miracles* as well as the Church of
Rome, as any one that is versed in Church-Hi-
 story may easily see. But of this more at large
 elsewhere.

P. 30.

2. Concerning the proof of *Infallibility*
 from Scripture, I laid down this Proposition.

No-

Prop. 17.

Nothing can be more absurd, than to pretend the necessity of such an infallible commission and assistance to assure us of the truth of those Writings, and to interpret them; and at the same time to prove that Commission from those Writings from which we are told, nothing can be certainly deduced, such an Assistance not being supposed; or to pretend that Infallibility in a Body of men, is not as liable to doubts and disputes, as in those Books from whence only they derive their Infallibility.

P. 37.

He grants the former part of this, *if by it be intended to prove such Commission only, or in the first place from these writings.* But, he saith, *a Christians Faith may begin either at the Infallible authority of Scriptures, or of the Church:* It seems then, there may be sufficient ground for a Christians Faith, as to the Scriptures, without believing any thing of the Churches Infallibility; and for this we have reason to thank him, whatever they or his own Church think of it. For, by this confession we may believe the Scriptures Authority, without ever believing a word of the Churches Infallibility; and let them afterwards prove it from *Scripture* if they can. Nay he goes yet farther, and saith *That the Infallibility of Scriptures as well as the Church may be proved from its own testimony:* but he

first

first supposes, that the *Infallibility* of one of these, be first learnt from *Tradition*. And therefore in the remainder of his discourse on this Subject, he shews *how the Infallibility of the Church may be proved from Tradition*, not shewing at all how the *Infallibility* of the Church can be proved from *Scripture*.

Scripture being thus deserted, as to the proof of the Churches *Infallibility*, I must pursue him to his other Hold of *Tradition*. The method of his discourse is this; *That the infallibility of the Guides of the Church was antecedent to the Scriptures; That the Apostles did not lose their infallibility by committing what they preached to writing; That their successors were to have this infallibility preserved in them, if there had been no writings; and cannot be imagined to have lost it because of them, because these give testimony to it; That this Infallibility is preserved by Tradition descending from Age to Age, as we say the Canon of Scripture is delivered to us; And lastly, That the Governours of the Church always held and reputed themselves infallible, appears by their Anathematizing dissenters.* In this Discourse there are some things supposed without reason, and other things asserted without proof. The Foundation of all this Discourse proceeds upon the supposition that the same *Infallibility* which was in the Apostles, must be

§. 8.
Of the Argument from Tradition for Infallibility.
P. 38, 39.

be continued in their Successors through all Ages of the Church, for which I see not the least shadow of reason produced. *Yes, saith he, supposing there had been no Writings, and no Infallibility, Christian Religion would have been no rational and well-grounded, no stable and certain Religion.* Two things in answer to this, I desire to be informed of: 1. What he thinks of the Religion of the *Patriarchs*, who received their Religion by Tradition, without any such Infallibility? 2. What he thinks of those Christians who receive the Scriptures or Churches Infallibility by virtue of common and universal Tradition (which is certainly the ground of the one, and supposed by him to be of the other) whether the Faith of such persons be rational and well-grounded, stable, and certain, or not; if it be, then there is no such necessity of Infallibility for that purpose; if it be not, then he doth hereby declare that the Faith of Christians is *irrational* and ill-grounded. For whatsoever is received on the account of Tradition antecedent to the belief of Infallibility, cannot be received on the account of it; but the belief of either Scriptures or Churches Infallibility, must be first received by virtue of a principle antecedent to the Scriptures or Churches Infallibility, *viz.* Tradition. By this it appears, that his very way of proving, destroys the thing he would prove

prove by it : For if the Tradition may be a
 sufficient ground of Faith, how comes Infalli-
 bility to be necessary? But if this Infallibi-
 lity be not necessary without the Scriptures,
 much less certainly is it now, since it is ac-
 knowledged on both sides, that the Apostles
 were infallible in their Writings, and that
 therein the Will of God is contained as to all
 things simply necessary to salvation. *But these*
successors of the Apostles were not deprived of
their infallibility by the Apostles writings;
 No certainly, for none can be deprived of what
 they never had; but where are the reasons all
 this while, to shew that there was the same
 necessity of Infallibility in the Apostles suc-
 cessors, as was in them? Two I find rather in-
 timated than insisted upon. 1. *That the Church*
would otherwise have failed, if there had been
neither Writings nor Infallibility; But if this
 Argument hold for any thing, it is for
 the necessity of the Scriptures, and not of In-
 fallibility; for we see God did furnish the
 Church with one, and left no footsteps of the
 other. We do not dispute how far the Church
 might have been preserved without the Scri-
 ptures, we find it hath been hard enough to
 preserve it pure with them: but we always
 acknowledge the Infinite Wisdom and Good-
 ness of God, that hath not left us in matters of
 Faith and Salvation to the determinations of
 men

men liable to be corrupted by Interest and Ambition, but hath appointed men inspired by himself to set down whatever is necessary for us to believe and practise. And upon these Writings we fix our Faith, as on a firm and unmovable Rock; and on the veracity of God therein contained and expressed, we build all our hopes of a Blessed Eternity. And one great benefit more we have by these divine Books, that by them we can so easily discover the fraud and imposture of the confident Pretenders to Infallibility. Which is the true reason why the Patrons of the Church of *Rome's* Infallibility have so little kindness for the Scriptures, and take all occasions to disparage them, by insinuating that they are good for nothing but to breed Heresies in the Heads of the People; upon pretence of which danger, they hide this Candle under a Bushel, lest it should give too much light to them that are in the House, and discover some things which it is more convenient to keep in the dark.

2. He saith, *The Infallibility of the Apostles successors, receives a second evidence from the testimony thereof found also in these Writings.* I confess I have seen nothing like the first evidence yet, to which this should be a second; but if by the first be meant that which I mentioned before, this is a proper second for it. Neither of them, I dare say, intend any

mil-

mischief to any body; both first and second
 are forced into the Field, where they stand on-
 ly for dumb shews, and wonder what they are
 brought for. But whereabouts I pray doth
 this *second Testimony* stand? what are its wea-
 pons? I hope not *Dic Ecclesie*, nor *Dabo tibi*
Claves, nor any of the old rusty Armour which
 our modern Combatants begin to be ashamed
 to appear with in the Field. And to speak
 truth, *N. O.* seems to understand his Art better,
 than to meddle with such heavy and Antique
 Armour, which every one hath been foiled
 with that hath undertaken to combat with
 them; only it seems a little for the credit of
 their Cause to point to such a Magazine, which
 in the dayes of Ignorance and Credulity, the
 Romantick Age of the Church, was in great
 request. But we must now buckle our selves
 to a new manner of Combat, which is from
 the Tradition of the Church, and that of the
 very same nature with what we have for the
Canon of Scripture. This I confess is bright
 shining Armour, and may do great service if it
 will hold; but that must be judged upon tryal,
 which I now set my self to. But we shall find
 that no weapons formed against Truth can pro-
 sper: and it hath been long observed of *Rome*,
 that it could never endure a close Siege.

The Question now is, whether they of the
Roman Church have the same universal Tra-
 dition

dition for the Infallibility of the Guides of it, which we have for the Canon of Scripture which he asserts. It is I suppose agreed on both sides, That the Tradition on which we receive and believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God was universal as to all Ages and Times of the Church; that from the beginning all disputes in Religion among true Christians, were built upon the supposition of it; That in no Age any persons were allowed to be good Christians who made doubt of it; That every Age doth afford plentiful testimonies of the belief of it. This is that universal Tradition we receive the Scriptures upon; and let any thing like this be produced for the Infallibility of the Guides of their Church, and we yield up the Cause to them. Can any fairer terms than these be desired? But we expect proofs, and so I perceive we may do to the Worlds end. I commend the Ingenuity of *N. O.* for endeavouring to escape out of the circle any way; but I believe they think themselves as wise, who still dance within it, knowing the impossibility of doing any good in this other way. The only Argument he insists upon is so weak, that I wonder he had not considered how often it had been answered by their own Writers. For it is certain that Provincial Councils as well as General, have *Anathematized dissenters, and pronounced them Hereticks*, which is his only Argument

to prove this Tradition of the Churches Infal-
 libility; and they had no way to answer it,
 but by saying, This doth not imply their Infal-
 libility. And if it doth not in the case of Pro-
 vincial Councils; why should he think it doth
 in the case of General? For the *Anathema's*
 of *Provincial Councils* did not relate to the
 acceptation of their Decrees, either by the
 Pope, or the whole Church, as *N. O.* supposes,
 but did proceed upon their own assurance of
 the truth of what they decreed; otherwise
 their *Anathema's* would have been only con-
 ditional, and not absolute and peremptory as
 we see they were. But I need give no other
 answer to this Argument, than in the words of
 Dr. Field whom *N. O.* appealed to before, *viz.*
That Councils denounce Anathema, not because
they think every one that disobeyeth the Decree
of the Council to be accursed, but because they
are persuaded in particular, that this is the
eternal truth of God which they propose, there-
fore they accurse them that obstinately shall
resist, as St. Paul willeth every Christian man
to Anathematize an Angel coming from Hea-
ven, if he shall teach him any other doctrine
than he hath already learned: yet is not every
particular Christian free from possibility of er-
ring. If the Argument then were good from
Anathematizing dissenters, and calling them
Hereticks, every particular person must by it
 I 2 be

Bell. de Con-
cil. l. 2. c. 10.

Field of the
Church,
l. 4. c. 4.

be proved Infallible, who are bound to Anathematize even Angels from Heaven in case of delivering any other doctrine from the Gospel, so that this, which is his only Argument in stead of proving an universal Tradition would prove an universal Infallibility.

Let the Reader now judge in his Conscience, whether here be any thing offered in the way of Tradition for the Churches Infallibility, that may bear the least proportion with the Tradition on which we receive the Scriptures? And yet if this had been true, it had been almost impossible that any one Age should have passed without remarkable testimonies of it. For no Age of the Church hath been so happy as not to have occasion for an Infallible Judge of Controversies, if any such had been appointed by Christ: and therefore it cannot be imagined, but that Christians must in all Controversies arising have appealed to him, and stood to his determinations, which must have been as well known in the practice of the Church, as Judges trying Causes in *westminster Hall*. But I challenge him to produce any one Age since the Apostles times to this day, wherein the Infallibility of a standing Judge of Controversies appointed by Christ, hath been received by as universal consent as the Authority of Scripture hath been in that very Age. Nay, I except not

that Age which hath been since the Council of Trent; for the Scriptures of the New Testament have been received of all sides, but the Infallibility of a standing Judge is utterly denied by one side, and vehemently disputed between several parties on the other. Some making only the Essential Church infallible, others the representative in Councils, others again the virtual, viz. the Pope. And supposing any infallible Judge necessary; it stands to reason it should be rather in one than in a multitude, and rather in a constant succession of Bishops in one See, than in an uncertain number who cannot be convened together as often as the necessities of the Church may require. But this is so far from being received as an Universal Tradition in that very Age wherein we live, that only one busy Party in the *Roman Church* do maintain it, Many others eagerly opposing it, and all the Princes and States in *Christendom* do in their actions, if not in words, deny it. And is not this now an Universal Tradition fit to be matched with that of the Scriptures? I had once thought to have brought testimonies out of every Age of the Christian Church manifestly disproving any such Tradition of Infallibility; and that not only of private persons when there were no Councils, but from the most solemn Acts of Councils, and the con-

session of their own Writers; but that would swell this Answer to too great a Bulk, and is not needful where so very little is offered for the proof of it. And yet I shall be ready to do it, when any thing more important requires it.

I now return to his exceptions against the latter part of the former proposition, *viz. That Infallibility in a Body of men, is as lyable to doubts and disputes, as in those Books from whence only they derive their Infallibility.* The plain meaning of which is, that it is a foolish thing to make use of a *medium* as uncertain as the thing which is to be proved by it; and therefore if the Infallibility of the Church be as lyable to doubts and disputes as that of the Scriptures, it is against all just Laws of reasoning to make use of the Churches Infallibility to prove the Scriptures by. And to this no answer can be proper, but either by saying that there is no absurdity in such a way of proving; or else that the Infallibility of the Church is more certain and evident than that of the Scriptures. Which I should be glad to see undertaken by any man who pretends to sense; which *N. O.* doth too much to meddle with it; and therefore fairly shuffles it off, and turns my words quite to another meaning, as though they had been spoken of the *doubtful sense of the Decrees of Councils*, which although

though elsewhere I had sufficient reason to speak of, yet that was not pertinent to this place. But this was a way to escape by saying something, though not at all to the purpose; and yet he gives no sufficient answer to that sense he puts upon my words, by bringing a Commentary upon them out of words used by me in another Discourse. Wherein I did at large argue against the Infallibility of General Councils, and after disproving it in general, I undertook to prove, that no man can have any certainty of Faith as to the Decrees of any Council; because men can have no certainty of Faith that this was a General Council, that it passed such Decrees, that it proceeded lawfully in passing them, and that this is the certain meaning of them; all which are necessary in order to the believing those Decrees to be infallible with such a Faith as they call divine. The words produced by him do speak of the doubtful sense and meaning of the Decrees of Councils, by which I shew that men can have no more certainty of the meaning of them, than of doubtful places of Scripture, not as though I supposed it impossible for Councils to give a clear decision in matters of controversy, so as that men might understand their meaning; but I expressly mention such Decrees as are purposely framed in general terms, and with ambiguous expressions

Rat. Act.
count. par.
3. ch. 1.
Sess. 4.
p. 510.

preffions to give satisfaction to the several dis-
 senting Parties; for which I instanced in
 some of the *Council of Trent*; whose ambi-
 guity is most manifest by the disputes about
 their meaning raised by some who were present
 at the making of them. I am far enough from
 denying that a *Commentary* may make a *Text*
plainer, or that a *Judges sentence* can be clear-
er than the Law; or that any *Council* can, or
hath decided any thing clearer than the thing
that is in controversie; which are his excep-
 tions: but I say, if *Councils* pretend to do
 more than the *Scriptures*, and to decide con-
 troversies for the satisfaction of the *World*,
 and that men ought to have that certainty of
 Faith by them, which they cannot have by
 the *Scriptures*, they ought never to be lyable
 to the same ambiguity and obscurity upon the
 account of which the *Scripture* is rejected from
 being a certain rule of Faith. For, as he saith
 well, *Infallibility alone ends not Controversies,*
but clearness; clearness in the point contro-
verted: which if *Councils* want, they are as
 unfit to end *Controversies* as the *Scriptures*
 can be pretended to be. But this is not the
 thing intended by me in this Proposition, and
 therefore it needs no farther answer; for the
 only subject of that Proposition, is the *Infalli-*
bility of the Church, and not the clearness of
 the *Decrees of Councils*.

But I cannot admire the ingenuity of this way of answering me, by putting another sense upon my words than they will bear; and by drawing words out of another Discourse, without shewing the purpose for which they are there used, and leaving out the most material passages which tended to the clearing of them. If *N. O.* thinks fit to oppose that whole Discourse against the Infallibility of General Councils, and set down fairly the several Arguments, I should be then to blame not to return a just answer: but I am not bound to follow him in such strange excursions, from the 17. Proposition of this Book to a single passage in a larger Book, and from that back to another at a mighty distance in the same Book; which being dismembred from the Body of the Discourse, must needs lose much of their strength. Yet with all the disadvantage he takes them (which is such, that the best Book in the World may be confuted in that manner) he hath no great cause to glory in the execution he hath done upon them. In answer to my Lord of *Canterburies* Adversary, who boasted of the Unity of the *Roman* Church: because whatever the private opinions of men are, they are ready to submit their judgments to the censure and determination of the Church, I had said, "that this will hold as well or better for our Unity as theirs, be-
 "cause

*Rat. Ac-
 count. p. 1.
 ch. 4. p. 101.*

"cause all men are willing to submit their
 "judgments to Scripture, which is agreed on
 "all sides to be infallible. Against these words
 thus taken alone *N. O.* spends two or three
 Pages; which might have been spared, if he
 had but fairly expressed what immediately fol-
 lows them in these words. "If you say it
 "cannot be known what Scripture determines,
 "but it may be easily what the Church de-
 "cides: it is easily answered, that the event
 "shews it to be far otherwise, for how many
 "disputes are there concerning the power of
 "determining matters of Faith? to whom it
 "belongs, in what way it must be managed,
 "whether Parties ought to be heard in matters
 "of Doctrine, what the meaning of the De-
 "crees are when they are made, which raise as
 "many divisions as were before them; as ap-
 "pears by the Decrees of the Council of
 "*Trent*, and the later of Pope *Innocent* rela-
 "ting to the five Propositions; so that upon
 "the whole it appears, setting aside force and
 "fraud, which are excellent Principles of
 "Christian Unity, we are upon as fair terms
 "of Union as they are among themselves. I
 do not therefore say, that the Church of *Rome*
 hath no advantage at all in point of Unity, but
 that all the advantage it hath, comes from
force and fraud, and setting these aside, we
 are upon as good terms of Union as they; and
 we

we do not envy them the effects of Tyranny and Deceit. It is the Union of Christians we contend for, and not of Slaves or Fools; we leave the *Turk* and the *Pope* to vie with each other in this kind of Unity, (although I believe the *Turk* hath much the advantage in it) and I freely yield to *N. O.* that they have a juster pretence to *Unity without Truth* than we. Which is agreeable to what he pleads for, *that they are more united in opinion than we; united in opinion, I say, true or false,* saith he, *here matters not; we speak here of Union not of Truth.* This and the following of *Tyranny*, which we complain of, are the two fairest Pleas for their *Union* I ever met with. But this is not a place to examine the pretences to Unity on both sides, that I have at large done in a whole Chapter in the late Book, and if *N. O.* had intended any thing to purpose against me on this subject, he ought much rather to have fallen on a just Discourse than two such lame Clauses as he makes these to be by his citation of them. And when he saith that, he may hear more of this Subject; in the mean time *Infallibility* is our business.

P. 43.

P. 44.

And therefore I proceed to the third Argument made use of by *N. O.* for the proof of *Infallibility* in the Guides of the Church, which is from *parity of Reason*. Because, I say, *¶ 9.*
 Of the Argument for Infallibility from Parity of Reason.

1. P. 6. 13. say, that it is repugnant to the nature of the
 design, and the wildom and goodness of God
 to give infallible assurance to persons, in writ-
 ing his Will for the benefit of mankind, if
 those Writings may not be understood by all
 persons who sincerely endeavour to know the
 meaning of them in all such things as are ne-
 cessary to their salvation; from hence he in-
 fers, *That if every Christian may become thus*
infallible in necessities, from 1. a clear rule;
2. a due Industry used; 3. and a certainty
that it is so used; may not the Church-Gover-
nours still much rather be allowed Infallible,
and so retain still their infallible Guideship;
and the people also, the more clear the rule of
Faith is proved to be, the more securely be
referred to their direction? and have we not
all reason to presume that the chief Guides of
the Church (even a General Council of them,
or if it be but a major part of this Council,
'tis sufficient) in their consults concerning a
point necessary to salvation delivered in Scrip-
ture, use at least so much endeavour (for more
needs not) as a plain Rustick doth, to under-
stand the meaning of it, and also the like sin-
cerity? For what they define for others, they
define for themselves also, and their salvation
is as much concerned as any other mans is, in
their mistakes. And next, why may not these
Governours upon such certainty of a sincere en-
deavour

deavour and clearness of the rule take upon them to define these points and enjoin an assent to, and belief of them to their subjects; especially since it is affirmed that all those from whom they require such obedience, if they please to use a sincere endeavour may be certain thereof as well as they? And are we not here again arrived at Church-infallibility, if not from extraordinary divine assistance, only sincere endeavour being supposed? And thus does not his conditional Infallibility of particular persons in necessities, the condition being so easie, necessarily infer a moral impossibility of the Churches erring in them; especially those necessities being contracted to the Apostles Creed, as it is by some.

To lay open the weakness of this Discourse, which appears fair and plausible at first view, I shall give an account of these two things.

1. What Infallibility I attribute to private persons.

2. How far the parity of reason will extend to the Infallibility of the Guides of the Church.

1. As to the *Infallibility* by me attributed to private persons; no such thing can be inferred from my words; and I wish *N. O.* would have kept to my own expressions, and not foisted in that term of *Infallibility*, without which all his Discourse would have betrayed its own
weak-

weakness. For take the terms which I laid down, and apply them to the Guides of the Church, and see what a mighty Infallibility springs from them. For if it be repugnant to the nature of the design, and to the wisdom and goodness of God to give infallible assurance to persons in writing his Will for the benefit of mankind, if those Writings may not be understood by all persons who sincerely endeavour to know the meaning of them in all such things as are necessary for their salvation, how doth it hence follow that the Guides of the Church must be infallible in teaching matters of Faith? If I had asserted that particular persons were infallible in determining what was true, and what not; then I grant the Argument would have much more held for those whose office it is to guide and direct others. But what he means by mens *being infallible in necessities*, I do not well understand; for it is capable of three several meanings: 1. That either men are infallible in judging of necessities to salvation; 2. Or, That men are infallible in teaching others what are necessities to salvation. Or 3. That men are infallible in believing such things as are necessary to salvation, *i. e.* that such is the goodness of God, and the clearness of Scriptures, that no man who sincerely desires to know what is necessary to salvation shall be deceived there-

therein; and what is this any more than to assert that God will not be wanting in necessities to mankind? and although I know no reason for using the term of *Infallibility* thus applied, yet the thing it self I assert in that sense, but in neither of the other: and what now can be inferred from hence by a parity of reason, but that the Guides of the Church, supposing the same sincerity shall enjoy the same privilege, which I know none ever denied them; but what is this to their infallibility in teaching all matters of Faith? which is the only thing to be proved by him. If he can prove this as necessary for the salvation of mankind as the other is, then he would do something to his purpose, but not otherwise. So that all this discourse proceeds upon a very false way of reasoning from believing to teaching, and from necessities to salvation, to all matters of Faith, which the Guides of the Church shall propose to men.

2. *But may we not inferr, that if God will not be wanting to particular persons in matters necessary to their salvation, much less will he be wanting to the Guides of the Church in all matters of Faith?* No certainly, unless it be proved that their Guidance is the only means whereby men can understand what is necessary to salvation; which is utterly denied by us, God having otherwise provided for that

that, by giving so clear a Rule in matters necessary, that no man who sincerely endeavours to know such things shall fail therein. *But will not the same sincerity in the Guides of the Church, extend to their knowing and declaring all matters of Faith?* This is a thing possible, and supposing God had entrusted them with the infallible delivery of all matters of Faith, were not to be questioned; but that is the thing still in dispute, and is not to be supposed, without proving it by plain evidence from those Books which are agreed on both sides to contain the Will of God. Besides, that no man that is acquainted with the proceedings of the Council of *Trent*, will see reason to be over-confident of the sincerity of Councils so palpably influenced by the Court of *Rome* as that was. *But however is it not fit in these matters that particular persons should rather yield to the guidance of others, than to the conduct of their own reason?* Which is *N. O's.* farther Argument in this matter, viz. *That a Fallibility being supposed, it is more fitting to follow prudent and experienced, though fallible persons direction rather than our own.* To this answer in these following particulars.

§. 10.
Of the
Authority
of the
Guides of
the Church

i. That God hath entrusted every man with a faculty of discerning Truth and Falshood; supposing that there were no persons in the World to direct or guide him. For

with

without this there were no capacity in mankind to be instructed in matters of Religion; and it were to no purpose, to offer any thing to men to be believed, or to perswade them to embrace any Religion. To make this plain, I will suppose a Person come to years of understanding, not yet professing any particular Religion, to whom the several Religions in the world are proposed by men perswaded of the truth of them, *viz.* the Christian, the Jewish, and the Mahumetan: He hears the several arguments brought for each of them, and hath no greater opinion of the teachers of one than of another, I desire to know whether this person may not see so much of the truth and excellency of Christian Religion, above the rest, as to choose that and reject all the rest. I hope no one will deny this; now if a man does here upon his own judgement and reason choose the Christian Religion, so as firmly to believe it, then God hath given to men such a faculty of judging, that upon the proposal of truth and falsehood, he may embrace the true Religion and reject the false, and such a Faith is acceptable and pleasing to God; Otherwise no man could embrace Christianity at first upon good grounds.

2. This faculty is not taken away; nor men forbidden the exercise of it in the choice of

K

their

their Religion by any principle of the Christian Religion; for our Saviour himself appeared to the Judgement of the persons he endeavoured to convince; he made use of many arguments to perswade them, he directed them in the way of finding out of truth; he reproved those who would not search into the things delivered to them. All which were to no purpose at all, if men were not to continue the exercise of their own Judgements about these matters. Accordingly we find the Apostles appealing to the Judgements of private and fallible persons concerning what they said to them, although themselves were infallible, and had the greatest Authority over them; we find them, not bidding *the Guides of the Church prove all things, and the people hold fast that which they deliver them*; but Commanding them indifferently *to prove all things and hold fast that which is good, i.e. what upon examination they found to be so*; we find those commended, who *searched the Scriptures daily whether the things proposed to them were so or no*. So that we see the Christian Religion doth not forbid men the exercise of that faculty of judging, which God hath given to mankind.

3. The exercise of this faculty was not to cease as soon as men had embraced the Christian Religion.

tian Doctrine. For the precepts given by the
 Apostles do belong to those who are already
 Christians, and that concerning the matters
 proposed by their Guides; nay, they are ex-
 pressly commanded to try and examine all pre-
 tendences to Infallibility and Revelation upon
 this great reason, because there should be ma-
 ny false pretenders to them. *Beloved, be-
 lieve not every Spirit, but try the Spirits
 whether they be of God, for many false Pro-
 phets are gone out into the world.* They are
 commanded not to believe any other Gospel,
 though Apostles or an Angel from Heaven
 should preach it; and how should they know
 whether it were another or the same if they
 were not to examine and compare them? They
 are bid to contend earnestly for the faith once
 delivered to the Saints; it might be a new
 Faith for any thing they could know, if they
 were not competent Judges of what was once
 delivered: They are frequently charged to be-
 ware of Seducers and false Guides, that should
 come in the name of Christ and his Apostles;
 they are told, that there should come a falling
 away and departing from the Faith; and that
 the time will come when men will not endure
 sound Doctrine, and shall turn away their
 ears from the truth and believe fables; that
 such shall come with all deceivableness of un-
 righteousness; with powers and signs and
 lying

1 Joh 4. 1.
 Gal. 1. 8.

Jude v. 4.

Mat. 24 4,
 5, 23, 24.
 Acts 20.

29, 30.
 1 Tim. 4 1,
 2 Thess. 2.

3.
 2 Tim. 4.
 3, 4.

2 Thess. 2.
 9, 10.

lying wonders. To what end or purpose are all these things said, if men being once Christians are no longer to exercise their own Judgements, but deliver them up into the hands of their Guides? What is this, but to put them under a necessity of being deluded when their Guides please? and as our Saviour saith, *when the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch.*

Mat. 18. 14

4. The Authority of Guides in the Church is not absolute and unlimited, but confined within certain bounds. Which if they transgress, they are no longer to be followed. So St. Paul saith, *if we or an Angel from Heaven teach any other Gospel, let him be accursed,* so that the Apostles themselves though giving the greatest Evidence of Infallibility, were no longer to be followed, than they held to the Gospel of Christ. And they desired no more of their greatest Disciples whom they had Converted to the Christian Faith, than to be

Gal. 1. 8.

1 Cor. 14. 1.

2 Cor. 1.

followers of them as they were of Christ, they told them *they had no dominion over their faith,* although they were far more assisted with an infallible Spirit, than any other Guides of the Church could pretend to be ever since. Therefore no present Guides, what ever names they go by, ought to usurp such an Authority over the minds of men which the Apostles themselves did not challenge;

enge; although there were greater reason for men to yield up their minds wholly to their guidance. We are far from denying all reasonable and just authority to be given to the Guides of the Church; but we say that their Authority nor being absolute is confined to some known rule; and where there is a rule for them to proceed by, there is a rule for others to judge of their proceedings; and consequently men must exercise their Judgements about the matters they determine, whether they be agreeable to that rule or not.

5. Where the Rule by which the Guides of the Church are to proceed hath determined nothing, there we say the Authority of the Guides is to be submitted unto. For otherwise, there would be nothing left, wherein their Authority could be shewn, and others pay obedience to them, on the account of it. Therefore we plead for the Churches Authority in all matters of meer order and decency, in indifferent rites and ceremonies; and think it an unreasonable thing to debar the Governours of a Christian society the Priviledge of Commanding in things which God hath not already determined by his own Law. We plead for the respect and reverence which is due to the Lawful constitutions of the Church whereof we are members; and assert the just Authority of the Guides of it, in the

exercise of that power which is committed to the Governours of it, as the successors of the Apostles in their care of the Christian Church, although not in their Infallibility.

6. We allow a very great Authority to the Guides of the Catholick Church in the best times of Christianity, and look upon the concurrent sense of Antiquity as an excellent means to understand the mind of Scripture in places otherwise doubtful and obscure. We profess a great Reverence to the Antient Fathers of the Church: but especially when assembled in free and General Councils; We reject the ancient heresies condemned by them; which we the rather believe to be against the Scripture, because so ancient, so wise and so great persons did deliver the contrary doctrine, not only to be the sense of the Church in their own time, but ever since the Apostles. Nay, we reject nothing that can be proved by an universal Tradition from the Apostolical times downwards; but we have so great an opinion of the Wisdom and Piety of those excellent Guides of the Church in the Primitive times, that we see no reason to have those things forced upon us now, which we offer to prove to be contrary to their doctrine and practice. So that the controversy between us is not about the Authority of the Guides of the Church; but whether

the Guides of the Apostolical and Primitive times ought not to have greater Authority over us, than those of the present Church in things wherein they contradict each other? This is the true State of the Controversie between us; and all the clamours of rejecting the Authority of Church Guides are vain and impertinent. But we profess to yield greater reverence and submission of mind to Christ, and his Apostles, than to any Guides of the Church ever since: we are sure they spake by an Infallible Spirit, and where they have determined matters of Faith or practice, we look upon it as arrogance and presumption in any others to alter what they have declared. And for the Ages since, we have a much greater esteem for those nearest the Apostolical times and so downwards, till Ignorance, Ambition, and private Interests sway'd too much among those who were called the Guides of the Church. And that by the confession of those who were members of it at the same time; which makes us not to wonder that such corruptions of doctrine and practice should then come in: but we do justly wonder at the sincerity of those who would not have them reformed and taken away.

7. In matters imposed upon us to believe or practise which are repugnant to plain commands of Scripture, or the Evidence of sense,

or the grounds of Christian Religion; we assert that no Authority of the present Guides of a Church, is to overrule our faith or practice. For there are some things so plain, that no Man will be guided by another's opinion in them; If any Philosopher did think his Authority ought to overrule an Ignorant Mans opinion, in saying the snow which he saw to be white was not so; I would fain know whether that Man did better to believe his eyes or the prudent, experienc'd Philosopher? I am certain, if I destroy the Evidence of sense I must overthrow the grounds of Christian Religion; and I am as certain if I believe that not to be bread which my senses tell me is so, I must destroy the greatest Evidence of sense; and which is fitter for me, to reject that Evidence which assures my Christianity to me, or that Authority which by its impositions on my faith overthrows the certainty of sense? We do not say that we are to reject any doctrine delivered in Scripture which concerns a Being infinitely above our understanding, because we cannot comprehend all things contained in it; but in matters lyable to sense and the proper objects of it, we must beg pardon if we prefer the grounds of our common Christianity before a novel and monstrous figment, hatched in the times of Ignorance and Barbarism, foster'd by
faction,

action, and imposed by Tyranny. We find no command so plain in Scripture that we must believe the Guides of the Church in all they deliver, as there is that we must not worship Images, that we must pray with understanding, that we must keep to our Saviours Institution of the Lords supper; but if any Guides of a Church pretend to an Authority to evacuate the force of these Laws, we do not so much reject their Authority, as prefer Gods above them. Doth that Man destroy the authority of Parents, that refuses to obey them, when they Command him to commit Treason? That is our case in this matter, supposing such Guides of a Church which otherwise we are bound to obey, if they require things contrary to a direct Command of God, must we prefer their Guidance before Gods? If they can prove us mistaken, we yield; but till then the Question is not, whether the Guides of the Church must be submitted to rather than our own reason? but whether Gods authority or theirs must be obeyed? And I would gladly know whether there be not some Points of faith, and some parts of our duty, so plain, that no Church-Authority determining the contrary ought to be obey'd?

8. No absolute submission can be due to those Guides of a Church who have opposed and contradicted each other, and condemned one another for error and heresie. For then
in

in case of absolute submission a Man must yield his assent to contradictions; and for the same reason that he is to be a Catholick at one time, he must be a heretick at another. I hope the Guides of the present Church pretend to no more Infallibility and Authority than their predecessors in the same Capacity with themselves have had; and we say they have contradicted the sense of those before them in the matters in dispute between us. Yet that is not the thing I now insist upon; but that these Guides of the Church have declared each other to be fallible by condemning their opinions and practices; and by that means have made it necessary for men to believe those not to be infallible, unless both parts of a contradiction may be infallibly true. Suppose a Man living in the times of the prevalency of *Arrianism*, when almost all the Guides of the Church declared in favour of it, when several great Councils opposed and contradicted that of *Nice*, when Pope *Liberius* did subscribe the *Sirmian* confession and Communicated with the *Arrians*, what advice would *N. O.* give such a one if he must not exercise his own Judgment, and compare both the Doctrines by the rule of Scripture? must he follow the present Guides even the Pope himself? Then he must joyn with the *Arrians*. Must he adhere to the *Nice* Council?

Council: but there were more numerous Councils which condemned it. What remedy can be supposed in such a case, but that every person must search and examine the several Doctrines, according to his best ability, and judge what is best for him to believe and practise? No answer can be more absurd in this case than that which some give, that *Liberius* only erred in his *External profession of faith and not in the belief of it*; for we are now speaking of such as are to be *Guides* to others, and on whose direction they are to rely, which must be something which may be known to them. Supposing then, that *Liberius* when he subscribed and joyned with the *Arrians*, was a Catholick in his heart, this takes as much off from the Authority of a Guide, as Error would do. For who dare rely upon him who acts against his conscience and believes one way and does another? Would any in the Church of *Rome* think it fit to submit themselves to the direction of such persons, whom they were assured, did not believe one word of what they professed; but joyned in communion with that Church only for some temporal ends? But in truth *Liberius* went so far, that *Hilary* denounces an *Anathema* against him, and all that joyned with him. Neither was this the only case of this nature to be supposed; for the

the Councils of *Ephesus* and *Chalcedon* proving ineffectual for the suppression of the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies, and rather greater disturbances arising in the Church after the later of these, because the writings of *Theodorus* of *Mopsuestia* and *Theodoret* against *Cyril*, and of *Ibas* to *Maris* the *Persian* not being therein condemned which were supposed to favour the *Nestorian* heresie, the *Nestorians* increasing their faction under the Authority of those writings, and the *Eutychians* making that their plea for rejecting that Council because it seemed to favour *Nestorianism*; the Emperour *Justinian* by the persuasion of *Theodorus* of *Cæsarea* resolves to have those *three Chapters* (as they were called) condemned, hoping by this means to perswade the *Eutychian* faction to accept the Council of *Chalcedon* and thereby to settle peace in the Church, which was then miserably rent and divided. To this end by the consent of the four Eastern *Patriarchs*, he publishes an *Edict* wherein he condemns the *three Chapters*, and *Anathematizes* those who should defend them; to this *Edict* the Guides of the Eastern Church subscribed; But *Vigilius* then Pope, (although *Victor Tunnensis*, a Writer of that Age saith, that he had given it under his hand to *Theodora* the Empress, that if he might be made Pope

Victor Tunnensis.
Chron.
Post Const.
Julian. Basilin.

he would condemn the three Chapters) yet now being by violent hands thrust into the chair, he changes his mind, and declares against the *Edict*; and threatens excommunication to those who approved it as being contrary to the Catholick faith, established in the Council of *Chalcedon*; and accordingly *Stephanus* his Legat withdrew from the communion of the Patriarch of *Constantinople*. Upon this, the Emperour sends for *Vigilius* to *Constantinople*, who being come thither excommunicates the Patriarch of *Constantinople* and all who condemned the three Chapters, or joyned with those who condemned them; and the Patriarch of *Constantinople* again excommunicates him; but after 4. or 5. months time, these excommunications were taken off: and Pope *Vigilius* after that publishes a decree wherein the three Chapters were condemned by him, with a *Salvo* to the authority of the Council of *Chalcedon*. Which made the Bishops of *Africa*, *Illyricum* and *Dalmatia* to fall off from him, and *Rusticus* and *Sebastianus* two Deacons of his own Church; whom the Pope excommunicated for so doing. Yet the Emperour himself was not satisfied with that *Salvo*, and the Pope not yielding without it, a General Council was called at *Constantinople* to put an end to this Controversie; to which the Pope

Pope being solemnly invited refused to come, the Council however proceeds in the examination of the *three Chapters*; during their session, *Vigilius* publishes his Apostolical decree or *Constitution*, to the whole Catholic Church, with the assistance of 16 Bishops of *Italy*, *Africa*, and *Illyricum*, and three *Roman Deacons*; wherein the Pope defends the *three Chapters*, and defines in the conclusion of it, *That it should be lawful for none to write or teach anything about these matters, contrary to his present Definition; or to move any farther question about them.* Notwithstanding which Definition of the Popes, the Council proceeds to the condemning the *three Chapters*, and to the *Anathematizing* those who did not condemn them. That this is the true matter of fact, I am content to appeal to the *Acts* of the Council, the *Edict* of *Justinian*, the Popes own *Decree*, or the *writers* of that *Age*, or the most learned persons of the *Roman Church*, such as *Baronius*, *Petavius* and *Petrus de Marca*, who have all given an account of this Controversie. I now desire to know, what a person in that time should do who was bound to yield an internal assent to the Guides of the Church? must he believe the Pope? He not only contradicts the Council but himself too; for it now appears by a

Greek

Baron.

A. D. 546,

547. 553.

Petav.

dogmat.

Theolog.

Tom. 4. l. 1.

c. 18.

Petr. de

Marca, di-

sert. de Vigili-

li decreto.

Greek Epistle first published by *Petrus de Marca* out of the King of France's Library that *Vigilius* being banished by *Justinian* did afterwards retract his own decree so solemnly made, and confirmed the Council. Would not a man now be in a pretty condition that were bound to believe one in all he said that so often contradicted himself? Must he believe the Council? what then becomes of the Popes infallibility? when they were so far from receiving the Popes Definition (though done in such a manner, in which *Bellarmin* saith, *the Pope cannot err, viz. when he teaches the whole Church,*) that they reject his decree and determine the quite contrary. I know but one way of evading this, (which is that commonly insisted on by those of the *Roman Church*,) viz. *that all this was not a Controversie about faith but persons.* So indeed some of the successors of *Vigilius* said, when they endeavoured to extenuate the matter as much as they could, finding that the Bishops of *Africa*, and many in *Italy* broke off from the Communion of the *Roman Church* on the account of this quarrel; But I desire any one in this matter to look to their Judgment who were concerned in this quarrel; and if men are bound to believe their Guides, they ought to believe them when they tell them what is a matter of

*Bill. de
Rom. Pontif. l. 4. c. 3.*

Bellarmin. de
Concil.
Auctor. 1.
2. c. 12.

of faith. And from the beginning of the
controverſie it was accounted a matter
of faith, not only by the Emperour, but
the Pope, by the Council, and by the Biſhops
who oppoſed the Council; and muſt we treat
them in other things and not in this? Beſides
the very proceedings of the Council manifeſt
it according to Bellarmin's own rules; for
faith he, *we then know a thing to be matter*
of faith, when the Council declares it to be
ſo, or them to be hereticks who hold the con-
trary; or, which is the moſt common, when
they denounce Anathema; and exclude from
the Church, thoſe who hold otherwiſe;
which agree to this, as will appear by the
collation of that Council. And Pope Vigilius
in the Greek Epiſtle now published in the
Tomes of the Councils, wherein he approves
the fifth Council, not only condemns the
three Chapters as contrary to faith, but *Ana-*
thematizes all thoſe who ſhould defend them
and like an Infallible Judge very ſolemnly re-
cants his former Apoſtolical decree, though
delivered by him upon great deliberation, and
with an intention to teach the whole Church.
I wonder who there could be in that Age, that
believed the Pope to be an infallible Guide
not the Eaſtern Biſhops; who excommuni-
cated him, and decreed directly contrary to
him; not the Western, for they likewiſe

excommunicated him, and not only forsook his Communion ; but that of the *Roman* Church : but did he believe himself infallible, when he so often changed his mind, and contradicted himself *in Cathedra* ? If he did, he was without doubt a brave man, and did as much as man can do.

This Controversie was scarce at an end, (for the Bishops of *Istria* continued in their separation from the *Roman* Church for seventy years, which was till the time of *Honorius*, A. D. 626.) when another was started, which gives us yet a more ample discovery of the more than fallibility of the Guides of the Church in that Age, when a Pope was condemned for a Heretick by a General Council ; in which case, I would fain know whether of them was infallible ? and to which of the Guides of the Church a man owed his internal assent, and external obedience ? This being an Instance of so high a nature, that the truth of it being supposed, the pretence of absolute Authority and Infallibility in the Guides of the *Roman* Church must fall to the ground, no wonder, that all imaginable arts have been used by those of the Church of *Rome* to take away the force of it ; among whom *Vigilius*, *Baronius*, *Bellarmino*, *Petavius*, and *Petrus de Marca* have laboured hardest in acquitting *Honorius*, but have proceeded

in different wayes ; and the two last are content the Pope should be condemned for *simplicity* and *negligence* , the better to excuse him from *heresie* ; but one would think these two were as contrary to the office of a *trusty Guide* , as *heresie* to one that pretends to be *infallible* . But the better to understand the force of this Instance , I shall give a brief account of the matter of fact, as it is agreed on all sides ; and the representing the divisions among the *Guides of the Church* at that time , will plainly shew how unreasonable it had been , to have required absolute submission to such who so vehemently contradicted each other.

We are therefore to understand , that the late *Council* at *Constantinople* being found unsuccessful . for bringing the *Eutychians* and their off-spring , to a submission to the *Council* of *Chalcedon* , another *expedient* was found out for that end , *viz.* that acknowledging two natures in Christ they should agree in owning that there was but one will and operation in him after the Union of both natures : because will and operation were supposed to flow from the Person , and not barely from the nature ; and the asserting two wills would imply two contrary principles in Christ which were not to be supposed. This *Expedient* was first proposed to *Her-*

Julius the Emperour by *Athanasius* the Pa-
 triarch of the *Jacobites*, or *Paulus* the Se-
 verian, and approved by *Sergius* Patriarch of
Constantinople, and by *Cyrus* of *Alexan-*
dia, and *Theodorus* Bishop of *Pharan* near
Egypt. *Cyrus* proceeded so far in it as by
 that means to reconcile the *Theodosiani*, a
 sort of Eutychians in *Alexandria*, to the
 Church, of which he gives an account to
Sergius of *Constantinople*; and sends him the
Anathema's which he published, among which
 the seventh was against those who asserted,
 more than one operation in Christ. *Sergius*
 approves what *Cyrus* had done; but *Sophro-*
nus a learned Monk, coming to *Alexandria*
 vehemently opposed *Cyrus* in this business;
 but *Cyrus* persisting, he makes his address
 to *Sergius* at *Constantinople*, and tells him of
 the dangerous heresie that was broaching
 under the pretence of Union; after some heats
Sergius yielded, that nothing should be far-
 ther said of either side. But *Sophronius* being
 made Bishop of *Jerusalem*, he publishes an
 Encyclical Epistle, wherein he asserts two
 operations, and Anathematizes those who held
 the contrary, and were for the Union; and
 writes to *Honorius* then Pope, giving him
 an account of this new heresie of the *Monothe-*
ites; the same year *Sergius* writes to him
 likewise of all transactions that had hitherto

been in this matter, and desires to know his judgement in such an affair, wherein the Peace of the Church was so much concerned. *Honorius* writes a very solemn letter to *Sergius*, wherein he condemns the contentious humour of *Sophronius*, and makes as good a confession of his faith as he could, in which he expressly asserts, that there was but *one will in Christ*, and agrees with *Sergius* that there should be no more disputing about one or two operations in Christ. Accordingly *Heraclius* by the advice of *Sergius* publishes his *Ecthesis* or declaration to the same purpose, which was approved by a Synod under *Sergius*; but opposed by *John 4. Bishop of Rome*, yet still maintained at *Constantinople* not only by *Sergius*, but by *Pyrrhus*, and *Paulus* his successors, who were both excommunicated by *Theodorus* succeeding *John*; after him *Pope Martin* calls a Council, wherein he condemns all the Eastern Bishops who favoured this new Heresie, and the two *Edicts* of silence published by *Heraclius* and *Constans*: but was for his pains sent for to *Constantinople* and there dyed. These contentions daily increasing, after the death of *Constans*, *Constantinus Pogonatus* resolves to try all wayes for the peace of the Church, and therefore calls a General Council at *Constantinople* A. D. 680. wherein the Heresie of the Mono-

con. E. con.
A. D. 680.
A. D. 680.

Monothelites was condemned; and the Writings of *Sergius*, *Cyrus*, *Theodorus* and *Honorius* in this matter, as repugnant to the doctrine of the Apostles, and decrees of Councils, and the judgement of the Fathers; and agreeable to the false doctrine of Hereticks, and destructive to souls: and not content meerly to condemn their doctrine, they further proceeded to *Anathematize*, and expunge out of the Church the names of *Sergius*, *Cyrus*, *Pyrrhus*, *Petrus*, *Paulus*, and *Theodorus*: and after these, *Honorius*, as agreeing in all things with *Sergius*, and confirming his wicked doctrines.

Here we are now come to the main point; we see a Pope delivering his judgement in a matter of faith concerning the whole Church condemned for a *Heretick* by a General Council for so doing: either he was rightly condemned or not; if rightly, what becomes of the infallibility of the Pope when he pretends to teach the whole Church in a matter of faith? If not rightly, what becomes of the authority and sincerity of General Councils, if a Council so solemnly proceeding should condemn one for Heresie, that not only did not err; but if some may be believed, could not? Surely the Council never thought of that, when they make no scruple of condemning him with the rest. What? were

Pope *Agatho's* Legats there present; and could not inform the Council of their presumption in judging the Infallible See: But no such thing was heard of in those times; these latter Ages have been only blessed with the knowledge of this unerring priviledge; and happy had it been, if all the records of former times had been burnt, that no Instances might have been brought to overthrow it. Yet wit and industry have not been wanting to bring poor *Honorius* off, if it had been possible: the sum of all may be reduced to these three Answers. 1. Either that the Acts of the Council are falsified. Or, 2. That the Pope did not err in faith. Or, 3. Supposing he did err, it was only as a private person and not as Head of the Church.

1. That the Acts of the Council are falsified. This is a shrew'd sign of a desperate cause, when against the consent of all antient Copies, both Greek and Latin, and the Testimonies of several Popes and Councils afterwards, learned men are driven to so miserable a shift as this. The first I find, who made this answer was *Albertus Pighius*, and after him *Baronius* and *Bellarmin* have embraced it: but the more ingenuious men of their own Church have been ashamed of it. *Melchior Canus* confesseth that not only the

General Council, but the seventh, and eighth under *Adrian*, and that several other Popes have confessed the truth of the thing; and therefore he doth not see how *Pighius* can vindicate *Honorius* in this matter. *Franciscus Torrensis* (afterwards better known by the name of *Turrianus*) a man highly applauded by *Baronius*, *Hosius*, *Lindanus*, and others, writ a Book of the 6. 7. and 8. Synod, wherein he severely chastises *Pighius* for his ill usage of this *sixth Council*, and saith that in this matter he shewed more prejudice than judgement. For, whereas he suspects that the letter of *Honorius* to *Sergius* was not sufficiently examined and compared with the Original, this betrayes, saith *Turrianus*, his great negligence in reading the Acts of the Council; for in the latter end of the twelfth Session, it is expressly said, that the Authentick Latin Epistle of *Honorius* was produced and compared by the *Bishop of Porto*; Besides how comes, saith he, the name of *Honorius* to be no less than nine times in the Council? and if all this had been by the Greeks corrupting the Copies, surely they would never have left that passage remaining concerning the corrupting the letters of *Mennas* and *Vigilius*: How comes *Leo 2.* in his Epistle to the Emperour wherein he confirms the Council, to Anathematize *Honorius* by name as guilty of heresie; some indeed,

*Francis.
Torren. de
6. 7. 8. Sy-
nod. Flor.
A.D. 1551.*

P. 11, 12.

P. 14.

deed, saith he, may say this is counterfeit too, (so do *Baronius* and *Binius*) but they have nothing but their bare conjecture for it, no argument, or authority to confirm it. Not only the Greek Writers, but the Latin confess he was there condemned, so doth *Bede*, saith he, so doth the *Pontifical Book* in the life of *Leo 2.* and in the Council under *Martin* at *Rome* the Epistle of *Paulus* to *Theodorus* was read, wherein was mentioned the consent of *Honorius* and *Sergius*, and no one there opposed it. *Humbertus* Legat of *Leo 9.* in his Book against the *Greeks* reckons *Honorius* among the condemned *Monothelites*. How came all the Copies to be corrupted at once, as he farther urges, that there are none left sound to correct others by? But that which he insists upon as the strongest argument of all is, from *Hadrian 2.* who calling a Council at *Rome* for the condemning of *Photius*, for Anathematizing him, hath these remarkable words; *That no Bishop of Rome was Anathematized before unless it were Honorius who after his death was con-*

demned for heresie, in which case alone it is lawful for inferiours to resist their Superiours, and to reject their doctrine; although even there, they would never have done it if the Bishop of the first See had not consented to it.

A very considerable Testimony; not only to prove

P. 24.
1.

Errat. Allo-
catio 3. Ha-
driani 2. ad
Conc. Rom.
Tom. 8.
Conc. Gen.
Ed. Lit.
Pw. 1671.
P. 1091.

prove that *Honorius* was condemned for Heresie, but that a Pope may be guilty of it, and be lawfully proceeded against for it, and that Pope *Agatho* did himself consent to the condemnation of *Honorius*. Notwithstanding these arguments of *Torrensis*, *Baronius* seeing that no other defence could be made, persists in the same accusation of *Forgery*: and out of his own head frames an improbable story of the corrupting the Copies of the Council by *Theodorus*, who being, saith he, *Anathematized as a Monothelite*, expunged his own name, and put in that of *Honorius*. A fiction so groundless and unreasonable, that nothing but meer despair could drive a man of common understanding to it. For there is not the least countenance for it in any Author; not the least colour of probability in the thing. For, that all the Copies of the Council should be corrupted by one man, and neither the Popes Legats present at the Council, nor any else should take notice of it; that no succeeding Popes should discover it, when they were concerned to vindicate *Honorius*, but did own the thing to be true; that *Theodorus* then living should be condemned, before it was known whether he would submit to the Council or not; that in the seventh and eighth Councils this should not be at all suspected, but the condemning *Honorius*

BAYON.
A. D. 681.
n. 29.

expresly mentioned in both that, a man at that time deposed from his Patriarchat of *Constantinople* should be able to make such a razure and forgery in the Copies of the Councils; that the Emperour *Constantine* who took so much care about the Council should suffer such a thing to be done, do all make this figment of *Baronius* so remote from any likelyhood, that *Baronius* had need to have prayed as once a man upon the rack did, that he might tell *probable lyes*. But all the miscarriages of *Baronius* in this matter are so fully laid open by one of their own Church, that I need not Insist any longer upon it; to whom no answer hath been given but that substantial one of an *Index Expurgatorius*. *Bellarmin* likes this way of answering the difficulty about *Honorius*; but the greatest strength he adds to *Baronius* is only saying, *without doubt it is so*: and he grants that the Seventh and Eighth Council did believe that Pope *Honorius* was condemned, but he saith they were deceived by the false Acts of the Council. But however they must believe that the Pope might fall into heresie and be condemned by a Council for it. Yet *Bellarmin* hath a fetch in this case beyond *Baronius*, viz. *That either the Acts of the Council are falsified, or the Council was guilty of intolerable impudence and error in condemning*

*Francis.
Catholus
Historia
heres. Monothelitar.
c. 2.
Alex 7.
Index Expurgator.
p. 277.
Bellarmin.
de Rom.
Pontifice.
l. 4. c. 11.*

demning *Honorius* without reason; For all
 the evidence they produce against him is from
 his *Epistles*, in which, saith he, nothing is
 contained, but what is sound and Orthodox;
 And this was the second way of defending
Honorius, viz. that he did not err in faith at
 all; and this way is taken by *Petavius*, and
 others; and was the way intended by *Petrus*
de Marcâ, as appears by the account given
 of his design by *Baluzius*; which was first
 to prove by most evident arguments, that
 the Acts of the Council were never corrupted
 by the *Greeks*, against the opinion before
 mentioned, and next that he was truly con-
 demned by the Council; but not for heresie,
 but only for negligence and remifness. I think
 there needs nothing to shew the weakness
 of this, but barely reading the *Anathema* of
 the Council against him, which is not, for
bare negligence but for confirming the wicked
Doctrines of Sergius. And I am apt to think,
 that learned person saw the weakness of his
 design too much to go on with it: and *Baro-*
nus and *Bellarmin* saw well enough, that
 whosoever was there Anathematized it was
 upon the account of *heresie* that he was so;
 and therefore *Baronius* would make men be-
 lieve the *Anathema* belonged to *Theodorus*
 and not to *Honorius*. *Petavius* thinks that
Honorius was deceived, but it was only by

Petav. dog-
mat. Theol.
l. 1. c. 21. f.
11.

Baluzius
de vitâ Pe-
tri Marcæ
p. 28, 29.

P. tav. ib.
se. 7. 13.

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his *simplicity and weakness*, not understanding the Controversie aright. So of old *John 4.* and *Maximus* in his dispute with *Pyrrhus* defended *Honorius*, that he spake indeed of *one will*, but that, say they, was to be understood only of *one will in his humane nature*. Which as *Combesis* saith, is a more pious than solid defence of him; and would as well serve, for *Sergius* and *Cyrus*, for *Heraclius* his *Ecthesis* and *Constans* his *Type*, as *Honorius* his letter. For who ever will peruse them, will find they all proceed on the same argument, that there could not be two wills in Christ, but one must be contrary to the other. But that which I insist on is this, that it is certain the Council approved by the Pope did condemn him for heresie; I desire therefore again to know whether he was rightly condemned or not; if he was, then the Pope must be guilty, and so not infallible; if not, then the Council must be according to *Bellarmino*, guilty of *intolerable impudence and error*; but in either case, there was no infallibility in the *Guides* of the Church which could require our internal assent to what they declared. But another defence is yet behind, which is, that though the Pope did err, yet it was in his *private Capacity*, and not as *Head of the Church*. But when doth he act as *Head of the Church*

if

if not when he is consulted about important matters of faith, as this was then supposed to be, by two Patriarchs; and when the Church was divided about them; and thereupon solemnly delivers his opinion? This is then a meer subterfuge, when men have nothing else to say. I conclude therefore this Instance of *Honorius* with the ingenuous confession of Mr. *white*, *That things are so clear in the cause of Honorius, that it is unworthy any grave Divine to pawn his own honour and that of Divinity too, in sowing together Fig-leaves to palliate it.* *Tabula sup- frag. p. 1304*

Thus far I have shewn, that those who pretend the most to be infallible Guides of the Church have opposed and condemned each other; from whence it necessarily follows, that no absolute submission is due to them, unless we can be obliged to believe contradictions. I might pursue this much further, and draw down the History of these contradictions to each other, through the following Ages of the Church; wherein Bishops have been against Bishops, Popes against Popes, Councils against Councils, Church against Church; especially after the breach between the Eastern and Greek Churches, the Greek and the Roman, and the Roman and those of the Reformation; But a man who is bound to rely only on the Authority of his Guides, must

must suppose them to be a greed ; and in case of difference among them, he must first choose his Religion and by that his Guide.

9. In the present divided State of the Christian Church, a man that would satisfy his own mind, must make use of his judgement in the choice of his Church, and those Guides he is to submit to. Unless a man will say, that every one is bound to yield himself absolutely to the Guidance of that Church which he lives in whether *Eastern or Greek, Roman or Protestant* : which I suppose *N. O.* will never yield to, for a reason he knows because then no Revolter from us could be justified. The true State then of the present case concerning the *Guides* of the *Catholick Church* is this; that it hath been now for many Ages rent and torn into several distinct Communion; every one of which Communion; hath particular *Guides* over it, who pretend it to be the duty of men to live in subjection to them, because every *Church* doth suppose it self to be in the right; now the Question proposed is, whether it be not fitter for me to submit to the *Guides* of the *Catholick Church*, than to trust my own judgment? I should make no scruple in all doubtful matters to resolve the affirmative, supposing that all the *Guides* of the *Catholick Church* were Agreed; for I should think it arrogance and

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presumption in me to set up my own private
 opinion in opposition to the unanimous con-
 sent of all the Guides of the Catholick
 Church, in such a case; but that is far from
 ours, for we find the Christian World di-
 vided into very different Communions. The
Eastern Churches are still as numerous, though
 not so prosperous as the *Roman*; the extent
 of the *Greek Church* alone is very great, but
 besides that, there are two other distinct
 Churches in those parts who break off Com-
 munion with the *Greek* on the Account of the
 Councils of *Ephesus* and *Chalcedon*; and the
 latter sort especially are very far spread in
 those parts, from *Armenia* to the *Abyssine*
Empire. In the time of *Jacobus de Vitriaco*, Jacob. de
Vitriaco
hist. Orient.
Cap. 77.
Bellonii Ob-
serv. l. i. c. 35.
 the laith *these two Churches were said to be*
more numerous than the Greek and the Latine; Cap. 77.
 and *Bellonius* in these later times assures us, Bellonii Ob-
serv. l. i. c. 35.
that the rites of the Greek Church do yet ex-
tend farther than the Latine. What then
 makes these Churches to be left out in our
 Enquiries after the Guides of the Catholick
 Church? Are these such inconsiderable parts
 of the Body, that no regard is to be had to
 them? I believe upon a strict examination,
 notwithstanding the reproach of heresie and
 Schism, which those of the Church of *Rome*
 cast upon all but themselves, they will be
 found much more sound parts of the Catho-
 lick

lick Church, than the *Roman Church* is. Five great Bodies or Communion of Christians are at this day in the World. 1. The most *Eastern Christians*, commonly called *Nestorians*, whether justly or no I shall not now examine, these are spread over the most Eastern parts, and all live in subjection to the *Patriarch of Muzal*. 2. The *Jacobites*, who are dispersed through *Mesopotamia*, *Armenia*, *Agypt* and the *Abyssine Empire*, and live under several *Patriarchs* of their own. 3. The *Greek Church*, of which, besides the *Moscovites*, are to be reckoned the *Melchites* or *Suriani*, and the *Georgians*; for though their language be different, they all agree in Doctrine. 4. The *Roman Church*, taking under it all in the Eastern parts who have submitted to the *Bishop of Rome*. 5. The *Protestant Churches* who have cast off subjection to the Pope, and Reformed the corruptions they charge the Church of Rome with. Now of these five parts, four of them are all agreed, that there is no necessity of living in subjection to the *Guides* of the *Roman Church*; but they are all under their own proper Guides, which they do not question will direct them in the right way to Heaven. Only those of the Church of Rome take upon themselves against all sense and reason to be the *Catholick Church*, and so exclude four parts

of 5. out of a capaciety of Salvation; and challenge Infallibility as belonging to the Guides of it alone. In this case, the Arrogance of the pretence, the uncharitableness of rejecting so mighty a number of Christians from the possibility of Salvation, are sufficient to make any Man not yield up his Faith at the first demand; but to consider a while, whether there be no other Churches, or Guides in those Churches? when he finds so many and those not inferiour to the *Roman Church* in any thing save only in pomp, pride, and uncharitableness; and all opposing those arrogant pretences of Authority and Infallibility in it, what reason can he have, supposing that he is to submit to any Guides, that he must submit only to those of the *Roman Church*? Why not as well to those of the *Eastern, Greek, or Protestant Churches*? If any one goes about to assign a reason, by charging them with *heresie*, or *Schism*, he unavoidably makes him Judge of some of the greatest difficulties in Religion, before he can submit to his Infallible Guides. He must know what *Nestorianism*, *Eutychianism*, *Monothelism* mean, how they came to be *heresies*, whether the Churches accused be justly charged with them? He must understand all the subtilties of Personalitie, Subsistence, Hypostatical Union; whether

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the Union of two natures in Christ be substantial, natural, or accidental? whether it be enough to say that the Divine and humane are one by inhabitation, or one by consent, or one by Communion of operation, or one by Communion of dignity and honour, all which the *Nestorians* acknowledged, only denying the union of two natures to make one Person? supposing a man be come to this, he must then be satisfied that the present *Eastern Christians* do hold the Doctrine of the old *Nestorians*, for they acknowledge Christ to be perfect God and perfect Man; and that the *Blessed Virgin* may be called the *Mother of the Son of God*, or the *Mother of the word*, but they stick only at calling her the *Mother of God*. Then for the other Churches which are charged with *Eutychianism*, he must understand, the exact difference between *nature* and *Person*, for if there cannot be two natures without two Persons, then either the *Nestorians* were in the right who asserted two Persons, or the *Eutychians* who denied two natures; but this being granted, he must be satisfied, that, those called *Jacobites* and *Eutychians*, although they disown *Eutyches* and follow *Dioscorus*, asserting that there were two natures before the Union, and but one after; and that *Dioscorus* was rightly condemned in the *Council of Chalcedon*; but

supposing they are willing to leave the dispute of two natures, on condition, that the humane nature be only made the *Instrument* of the *Divine* in its operations, whether they are justly charged with *heresie* in so doing? All these things a Man must fully be satisfied in, before he can pronounce those Churches guilty of *heresie*, and so not to be followed. But supposing those Churches be rejected, why must the *Greek*, which embraces all the *Councils* which determin'd those subtle controversies? Here comes the mystery of the procession of the Holy Ghost to be examined, whether from the Father alone or from the Father and the Son? but supposing this to be yielded, why may he not joyn with those Churches, which agree with the *Church of Rome* in all those points, as the *Protestant Churches* do? Here a Man must examine the notes of the Church, and enquire whether they be true notes, whether they agree only to the *Roman Church*? And one of the greatest of those notes being *consent with the Primitive Church*, a Man that would be well satisfied, must go through all the disputes between us and the Church of *Rome*, and by that time he is well settled in them, he will see little use, and less necessity of an Infallible Guide. So that a Man who would satisfie himself in this divided State of the Christian

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Church,

Church, what particular Communion he ought to embrace and what *Guides* he must follow, must do all that, for the preventing of which an Infallible Guide is said to be necessary. *i. e.* he must not only exercise his own judgment in particular controversies, but must proceed according to it; and joyn with that Church which upon Enquiry he judges to be the Best.

10. A prudent submission is due to the Guides of that Church, with which a person lives in Communion. Having shewed that absolute submission is not due, all that can be left is a submission within due bounds, which is that I call a prudent submission. And those bounds are these following.

1. Not to submit to all those who challenge the Authority of Guides over us, though pretending to never so much Power and Infallibility. When *N. O.* would perswade me to submit my understanding to the Infalible Guides of the Church; He must think me a very easie man to yield, till I be satisfied first that God hath appointed such to be my *Guides*, and in the next place that he hath promised I fallibility to them. And that is the true State of the Controversie between us and those of the Church of *Rome* in this matter; they tell us we are bound to submit to the *Guides* of the Church; we desire to know whom they mean by these *Guides*; and at last we under-

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stand them to be the Bishop of *Rome* and his Clergy. Here we demur, and own no Authority the Bishop of *Rome* hath over us; we assert that we have all the *Rights* of a *Patriarchal Church* within our selves, that we owe no account to the Bishop of *Rome* of what we believe or practise; it is no Article of our Creed that God hath made him *Judge either of the quick or the dead*; We have Guides of our Church among our selves, who have as clear a succession and as good a title as the Bishops of any Church in the world. To these, who are our Lawful Guides, we promise a due obedience, and are blame worthy if we give it not; but for the Bishop and Clergy of *Rome*, we own none to them, let them challenge it with never so much confidence, and arrogant pretences to Infallibility. So that here is a contest of *Right* in the case, antecedent to any duty of submission, which must be better proved than ever it hath yet been, before we can allow any dispute, how far we are to submit to the Guides of the *Roman Church*?

2. Not to submit to those who are Lawful Guides in all things they may require. For our dispute is now about Guides supposed to be fallible, and they being owned to be such may be supposed to require things to which we are bound not to yield. But the great difficulty now is, so to state these things,

as to shew that we had reason not to submit to the Guides of the *Roman Church*, and that those of the Separation have no reason not so submit to the Guides of our Church. For that is the obvious objection in this case, that *the same pretence which was used by our Church against the Church of Rome, will serve to justify all the Separations that have been or can be made from our Church.* So my Adversary N. O. in his Preface saith, *that by the principles we hold, we excuse and justify all Sects which have or shall separate from our Church.* In answer to which calumny I shall not fix upon the perswasion of Conscience, for that may equally serve for all parties; but upon a great difference in the very nature of the case, as will appear in these particulars.

1. We appeal to the Doctrine and practice of the truly Catholick Church in the matters of difference between us and the Church of *Rome*: we are as ready as they to stand to the unanimous consent of Fathers, and to *Vincentius Lerinensis* his Rules, of Antiquity, universality and consent; we declare, let the things in dispute be proved to have been the practice of the Christian Church in all Ages, we are ready to submit to them: but those who separate from the Church of *England* make this their Funda-

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mental princip'e as to worship', (wherein the difference lyes,) that nothing is Lawful in the worship of God, but what he hath expressly commanded; we say all things are Lawful which are not forbidden, and upon this single point stands the whole Controversie of separation as to the Constitution of our Church. We challenge those that separate from us to produce one person for 1500. years together, that held Forms of prayer to be unlawful; or the ceremonies which are used in our Church: We defend the Government of the Church by Bishops to be the most ancient and Apostolical Government, and that no persons can have sufficient reason to cast that off, which hath been so universally received in all Ages since the Apostles times: if there have been disputes among us about the nature of the difference between the two orders, and the necessity of it in order to the Being of a Church, such there have been in the Church of *Rome* too. Here then lyes a very considerable difference, we appeal and are ready to stand to the judgment of the Primitive Church for interpreting the letter of Scripture in any difference between us and the Church of *Rome*; but those who separate from our Church will allow nothing to be lawful but what hath an express command in Scripture.

2. The Guides of our Church never challenged any Infallibility to themselves; which those of the Church of *Rome* do, and have done ever since the Controversie began. Which challenge of Infallibility makes the Breach irreconcilable while that pretence continues; for there can be no other way but absolute submission where men still pretend to be infallible: It is to no purpose to propose terms of Accommodation between those who contend for a Reformation, and such who contend that they can never be deceived; on the one side, errors are supposed; and on the other, that it is impossible there should be any. Until therefore this pretence be quitted, to talk of Accommodation is folly, and to design it madness. If the Church of *Rome* will allow nothing to be amiss, how can she Reform any thing; and how can they allow any thing to be amiss who believe they can never be deceived? So that while this Arrogant pretence of Infallibility in the *Roman* Church continues, it is impossible there should be any Reconciliation: But there is no such thing in the least pretended by our Church, that declares in her Articles

Article 21. *that General Councils may err, and sometimes have erred even in things pertaining to God, and that all the proof of things to be believed is to be taken from Holy Scripture.* So that as to the Ground of Faith there is no difference be

Article 21.

Article 3.

tween our Church and those who dissent from her; and none of them charge our Church with any error in Doctrine; nor plead that as the reason of their separation.

3. The Church of *Rome* not only requires the belief of her errors but makes the belief of them necessary to Salvation: which is plain by the often objected Creed of *Pius* 4. Wherein the same necessity is expressed of believing the additional Articles, which are proper to the *Roman* Church, as of the most Fundamental Articles of Christian Faith. And no Man who reads that *Bull* can discern the least difference therein made between the necessity of believing one and the other; but that all together make up that Faith, without which no man can be saved; which though only required of some persons to make profession of, yet that profession is to be esteemed the Faith of their Church. But nothing of this nature can be objected against our *Church* by dissenters, that excludes none from a possibility of Salvation merely because not in her Communion, as the Church of *Rome* expressly doth: for it was not only *Boniface* 8. who determined as solemnly as he could, *that it was necessary to Salvation to be in subjection to the Bishop of Rome*; but the *Council of Lateran* under *Leo* 10. decreed the same thing.

Concil. La-
teran. A.D.
1516. sect.
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4. The Guides of the *Roman* Church pretend to as immediate authority of obliging the Consciences of men, as Christ or his Apostles had ; but ours challenge no more than teaching men to do what Christ had Commanded them, and in other things, not commanded or forbidden, to give rules, which on the account of the General Commands of Scripture, they look on the members of our Church as obliged to observe. So that the Authority challenged in the *Roman* Church encroaches on the Prerogative of Christ, being of the same nature with his ; but that which our Governours plead for, is only that which belongs to them as Governours over a Christian Society. Hence in the Church of *Rome* it is accounted as much a mortal sin to disobey their Guides in the most indifferent things, as to disobey God in the plain Commands of Scripture : but that is not all they challenge to themselves, but a power likewise to dispence with the Laws of God, as in matter of marriages, and with the Institution of Christ as in Communion in one kind ; and promise the same spiritual effects to their own Institutions as to those of Christ, as in the 5. Sacraments they have added to the two of Christ, and to other ceremonies in use among them.

5. Setting aside these considerations, we dare appeal to the judgment of any person

of what persuasion soever, whether the rea-
 sons we plead for separation from the Church
 of *Rome* be not in themselves far more consi-
 derable than those, which are pleaded by such,
 who separate from our Church? *i. e.* Whe-
 ther our Churches imposing of three Cere-
 monies declared to be indifferent by those who
 require them, can be thought by any men of
 common sense so great a burden to their Con-
 sciences, as all the load of superstitious so-
 peries in the *Roman* Church? whether pray-
 ing by a prescribed form of words be as con-
 trary to Scripture, as praying in an unknown
 tongue? Whether there be no difference be-
 tween kneeling at the Sacrament upon Pro-
 testants Principles and the Papists adoration
 of the Host? Whether Transubstantiation,
 image-worship, Invocation of Saints, In-
 dulgences, Purgatory, the Popes supremacy,
 be not somewhat harder things to swallow,
 than the Churches power to appoint matters
 of order and decency? Which particulars
 make the difference so apparent between the
 separation of our Church from the Church
 of *Rome*, and that of dissenters from our
 Church; that it seems a very strange thing
 to me that this should be objected by our Ene-
 mies on either side. And thus much may
 suffice to clear this point of submission to the
 Guides of a Church; of which I have the
 more

more largely discoursed, not for any difficulty objected by *N. O.* but because the thing it self did deserve to be more amply considered. But some other things relating to Church-Authority I must handle afterwards, and therefore now return to my Adversary.

§. 11.
Of the
sense of
Scripture.

The next thing to be debated is, what assurance we can have of the sense of Scripture in doubtful places, if we allow no Infallible Guides to interpret them? For that is the second main principle of *N. O.* *that without this Infallible Assistance of the Guides of the Church, there can be no certainty of the sense of Scripture.* And it is chiefly on this Account that *N. O.* doth assert the necessity of Infallible Guides of the Church. For as appears by his concessions he yields that the Churches *Infallibility is not necessary to the foundation of faith*; for men *faith, he saith, may begin at the Infallible Authority of Scriptures*; but the main ground on which he contends for the necessity of Infallible Guides is for the interpretation of controverted places and giving the true sense of Scripture: for which he often pleads for necessity of an external infallible Guide. *Because God hath referred all in the dubious sense of Scripture to the direction of his Ministers their spiritual Guides, whom he hat*

P. 37.

P. 6. 14.

P. 47.

set over them to bring them in the Unity of the Faith to a perfect man; and that they may not be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of those who lye in wait to deceive. And without which Guide St. Peter observes, that in his time some persons (for any thing we know diligent enough) yet through want of learning, and the instability of adhering to their Guides, being unlearned, saith he, and unstable, wrested some places of Scripture, hard to be understood, to their own destruction. Therefore these Scriptures are also in some great and important points hard to be understood. And afterwards, he saith, that Christians who have sufficient certainty of the truth of Christianity, may be deficient in a right belief of several necessary Articles of this Christian Faith, if destitute of that external Infalible Guide therein: without which he determines that men must fluctuate and totter, and vary one from another, whilst the Scriptures are ambiguous in their sense and drawn with much art to several Interests. The force of all which, comes to this, that we can arrive at no certainty of the sense of Scripture in Controverted places, without an external Infalible Guide: and therefore we are bound to submit to him.

Ephes. 4.

11, 13, 14.

2 Pet. 3.

16.

P. 67.

Here are two things to be discussed.

1. What

1. What necessity there is for the Salvation of persons, to have an infallible interpretation of controverted places of Scripture.
2. Whether the denying such an Infallible Interpreter makes men incapable of attaining any certain sense of doubtful places? For either it be not necessary that men should have an infallible interpretation; or men may attain at a certain sense without it, then there can be no colour of an argument drawn from hence to prove the necessity of an infallible Guide.

1. We are to enquire into the necessity of such an infallible interpretation of doubtful places of Scripture. There are but three grounds on which it can be thought necessary either that no man should mistake in the sense of Scripture, or that the Peace of the Church cannot be preserved, or that men's Souls cannot be saved without it. If it were necessary on the first account, then every particular person must be infallible; which being not pleaded for, we must consider the other two grounds of it. But here we are to take notice, that the matter of our present enquiry is concerning the clearness of Scripture in order to the Salvation of particular persons; of which the Proposition laid down by me expressly speaks. If therefore N. O. do any thing to overthrow this, he must

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prove, not that there are doubtful and controverted places, which no one denies, but that the sense of Scripture is so doubtful and obscure in the things which are necessary to mens Salvation, that persons without an Infallible Guide cannot know the meaning of them. If he prove not this, he doth not come near that which he ought to prove. We do not therefore deny, that there are places of great difficulty in the Books of Scripture; but we assert, that the necessaries to Salvation do not lye therein; but those being plain and clear, men may be saved without knowing the other. As a Seaman may safely direct his compass by the Stars, although he cannot solve all the difficulties of Astronomy. Can any man in his senses Imagine that Christs coming into the world to dye for sinners, and the precepts of a holy life which he hath given, and the motives thereto from his second coming to judge the World, are not more plain than the Apocalyptical visions, or the proofs for the Church of *Romes* Infallibility? If a person then by reading and considering those things which are plain, may do what Christ requires for his Salvation; what necessity hath such a one to trouble himself about an Infallible Guide? For either he may go to heaven without him, or not: if he may, let them shew the necessity he

he is of to that end, which may be attained without him; if not, then the things necessary to Salvation cannot be known without him. Let this be proved, and I will immediately yield the whole cause: and till it be proved my Principles remain unshaken. But saith *N. O.* the Scripture is obscure in some great and important points, because St. Peter saith, that men unlearned and unstable, (though it may be diligent enough) wrested some places of Scripture hard to be understood to their own destruction. But doth St. Peter say that the Scriptures are so hard to be understood that sober and devout minds cannot learn therein, what is necessary to their Salvation? This had been indeed to their purpose: but it is far enough from St. Peters. He only saith that in St. Paul's Epistles there are some difficult passages, which men that wanted judgment and constancy, and it may be diligence too, were ready to pervert to their own mischief. But if there be such difficulties, is there nothing plain and easie? if bad men may pervert them, may not good men make a good use of them? If some may destroy themselves by their own weakness and folly, may not others be saved by their diligence and care? If it were proved by *N. O.* that St. Peter charged all this upon them for want of adhering to their Guides,

that

that would approach nearer his business; but if *St. Peter* had intended any such thing as *N. O.* insinuates, what fairer opportunity had there been of preventing this Instability in others by telling them, that God had appointed infallible Guides in his Church to prevent such abuses of Scripture, and that, so long as they adhered to them, they were safe; but there is not the least word in *St. Peter* to this purpose, when it had been most necessary to have given such advice; but he only bids them, have a care of *imitating the in-* 2 Pet. 3: 17, 18.
constancy of such wicked men, and grow in the
grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. If on so fair and just an occasion offered, *St. Peter* himself whom they believe to have been Head of the Church at that time, and at *Rome* at the writing of this Epistle, doth wholly omit referring men in the sense of obscure places to Infallible Guides; what can we else infer but that *St. Peter* knew of so such appointment of Christ, or thought no such thing of necessity for his Church? For if he had, such was his care and faithfulness, he would never have omitted so necessary a thing; if the salvation of mens souls had depended upon it.

If it be not then necessary to mens Salvation to have an infallible interpretation of
 N 6. 12.
Of a Judge
of Contro-
versies.
 doubt-

doubtful places; for what other end can it become necessary? Is it, *that without this, the Churches peace cannot be preserved, because Controversies arising in the Church, no issue can be put to them, unless there be an infallible Judge to determine which is the true sense of Scripture?* For it is impossible That Scripture it self should be judge, because the Controversie is about the sense of Scripture. So that either there is no way left to determine Controversies, or there must be an infallible judge to deliver the sense of Scripture in doubtful places. This is the force of all that I know can be said in this matter; to which I answer.

1. The strength of this argument depends upon the supposition of the necessity of determining Controversies in Religion by a living Judge, who must pronounce sentence between the parties in difference. Which supposition, how plausible soever it seems, is not built on any sufficient foundation of Scripture or Reason. For the weakness of humane understanding, the power of Interest and passion, and the ambiguity of words, are as apt to beget disputes in Religion as in any other things, so that we have no cause at all to wonder that there should happen to be Controversies among men about these matters; when we see them daily happen about the Laws of every

every Country. The only Question now is; whether as the necessities of people have made it necessary that there should not only be Laws but Judges, who should be as the most equal Arbitrators to put an end to such differences as may happen among men about matters of Right and Law, it be thus in Religion too? And this Question is plainly about a matter of Fact, *i. e.* whether Christ hath appointed such Judges in all Ages, who are to determine all emergent Controversies about the difficult places of his Law? And in this case we think it is all the reason in the World, that they who *Affirm* should *Prove*, especially, when they Affirm a matter of their own Right, and challenge a submission from others on the Account of it. We desire them who challenge to be our infallible Guides, that they would shew their Commission, and produce their Patent: For as we are ready to yield *obedience*, if they crave it, so we think it Treason and Tyranny in them to usurp it, if they have it not. And it is to no purpose to talk of the Benefits that would come to the world by an infallible Judge of Controversies, unless they first prove that there is one. But we must not allow men to prove things to be, meerly because they think it fitting they should be; for that is to make themselves Wiser than Christ, and rather

to tell him what he should have done, than prove what he hath done. What if Christ having provided for the necessities of Salvation by a clear Revelation should leave other things in the dark, to exercise the Wits of some and the Charity of others? What if he thought it sufficient to oblige men to the greatest honesty and Integrity in knowing and doing the Will of God, and hath promised to pass by the errors and failings men are subject to barely as men? What if he foresaw this matter of ending Controversies would be an occasion of raising one of the greatest in the Christian World, and become a pretence of the most intolerable Tyranny over the minds of men? And therefore what if he thought it reasonable to leave the failings of mens understandings and lives upon the same terms, so as to give sufficient means to prevent either, but not effectually to hinder men from falling into either of them? What if the nature of Religion will not bear such a determination of Controversies as civil matters will? because, civil matters concern the right and wrong of particular persons, in which it is not the sentence of the Judge so much as the Civil force whereby it is backed which puts an end to the dispute; but in matters of Religion, the ending Controversies can be no effect of force

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and power, but of reason and conviction of Conscience; and all the pretended infallibility in the World can never satisfy my mind, unless I be first assured of that infallibility. In all civil causes, it is agreed on both sides that such Judges are appointed to determine cases of Law; and on the supposition of this men proceed to tryal before them; but in our case this is the main thing in dispute, and he that pretends to be the Judge is the most accused partie, and what reason can there be, that only on the pretence of greater peace, if Controversies were referred to an infallible Judge, we must therefore allow every one that pretends to it to be such an infallible Guide? And we must on the same ground allow every one, if we must not first be satisfied of the grounds on which it is challenged by any one. And withal, since Christ is the best Judge of what is fittest for his Church, we must see by his Laws whether he hath made it necessary for all Controversies to be ended by a standing Judge, that should arise about the sense of Scripture? If he hath not done it, it is to no purpose to say, it is fit he should have done it; for that is to upbraid Christ with weakness and not to end differences in his Church.

2. Supposing it necessary that Controversies

ties should be ended, it may as well be done without an infallible Judge of the sense of Scripture as with one; for all that is pretended to be done by an infallible Judge is to give a certain sense of controverted places; so that men are either bound to look on that which they give as the certain sense on the account of the infallibility of the Interpreter, or that such an infallible interpretation being set aside, there is no way to know the certain sense of Scripture. If the first, then no man can be more certain of the sense of any doubtful place, than he is of the infallibility of his Interpreter: I desire therefore to be resolved in this case. I am told *I can arrive at no certainty of the sense of doubtful places of Scripture without an infallible Interpreter*, I say the places of Scripture which are alledged for such an infallible Judge are the most doubtful and controverted of any; I would fain understand by what means I may come to be certain of the meaning of these places, and to find out the sense of them? Must I do it only by an infallible Guide? but that is the thing I am now seeking for, and I must not suppose that which I am to prove. If I may be certain without supposing such an infallible Guide of the meaning of these very doubtful and controverted places, then why may I not

by the same way of proceeding arrive at the certainty of any other less doubtful and obscure places: unless there be some private way to come at the sense of those places which will hold for none else besides them, which is not so easie to understand.

2. I come therefore to the second enquiry, which is about the means of attaining the certain sense of Scripture in doubtful places, without the supposition of an infallible Guide. It will not I hope be denied, that the Primitive Christian Church had a certain way of understanding the sense of doubtful places, as far as it was necessary to be understood, and that they wanted no means which Christ had appointed for the ending of Controversies. But I shall now shew, that they proceeded by no other means than what we use, so that, if they had any means to come to a certain sense of Scripture, we have the same; and it would be a very hard case if by the use of the same means we cannot attain the same end. I shall therefore give an account of the proceeding of the Primitive Church in this weighty Controversie concerning the sense of Scripture in doubtful places; and if no such thing was then heard of as an infallible Judge, it is a plain demonstration, they thought there was none appointed; because the disputes that happened

then required as much the Authority of such a Judge as any that are at this day in the Christian Church,

§. 13.
The way
used in the
Primitive
Church for
finding the
sense of
Scripture.

Epiphan.
heres. 26.
sect. 2, 3.

Epiphan.
Heres. 28.
30.
Irene. l. 1.
c. 26.

In the first Ages of Christianity, there were two sorts of Controversies which disturbed the Church; one was concerning the Authority of the Books of the new Testament, and the other concerning the sense of them. For, there was no one Book of the New Testament whose Authority was not called in Question, by some Hereticks in those first Ages. The *Gnosticks*, (by whom I understand the followers of *Simon Magus*, *Menander*, *Saturninus* and *Baslides*), had framed a new Religion of their own under the name of *Christian*, and had no regard to the Writings either of the old or new Testament, but had a Book of their own, which they called the *Gospel of Perfection*. But as *Epiphanius* well observes, *no man that hath understanding; needs Scripture to refuse such a Religion as theirs was; for right reason alone was sufficient to discover the folly and filthiness of it.* The followers of *Cerinthus* and *Ebion* acknowledg'd no other Gospel but that of *St. Matthew*; and that not entire, but with diverse corruptions and interpolations according to their several fancies. *Cerdon* and *Mercion* allowed no Gospel but

but that of *St. Luke*, which they altered according to their pleasure, cutting off the Genealogy and other places, and inserting many things as it served most to their purpose, as may be seen at large in *Epiphanius*. Some say, the *Valentinians* received no other Gospel but that of *St. John*, (as the *Alogi* in *Epiphanius* rejected that alone,) but I do not find that *Valentinus* did reject any, but added more; for *Irenaeus* chargeth the *Valentinians* only with adding another Gospel, which they called the Gospel of Truth; and *Tertullian* expressly saith, that *Valentinus* therein differed from *Marcion*, that *Marcion* cut off what he pleased with his sword, but *Valentinus* corrupted it with his pen; for although he allowed all the Books of the New Testament, yet he perverted the meaning of them. *Eusebius* tells us that the followers of *Severus* rejected the Epistles of *St. Paul* and the Acts of the Apostles; and interpreted the Law, and the Prophets and the Gospels after a peculiar sense of their own. So that we see those who undertook to confute these Hereticks were not only to vindicate the true sense of Scripture, but to dispute with such, who did not own the same Books which they did; and therefore were forced to use such ways of arguing as were proper to them: as may be seen at large by the proceedings of *Irenaeus*, and

c. 29.

L. 3, c. 11.

Epiphaz.

bar. 42.

Iren. l. 3.

c. 11.

Tertull. de

pracip. haer.

ret. c. 38.

Euseb. hist.

Eccles. l. 4.

c. 29.

Iren. l. i.
c. i.

and *Tertullian* against them. But because the *Valentinians* and *Marcionites* did endeavour to suit their extravagant fancies to the Scriptures allowed by them, it will be necessary for us, to enquire by what means they went about to clear the true sense of Scripture from their false Glosses and Interpretations. *Irenæus* in the beginning of his Book, relating at large the Doctrines of the *Valentinians*, saith, that by the perverse interpretations and corrupt expositions of the Scripture, they drew away unstable minds from the true faith; for they pretended to find out deeper and more mysterious things in the Scripture, than others were acquainted with, viz. That Christ intimated the 30. *Æons* by not appearing till the 30. year of his Age. That the parable of men called at the first, the third, the sixth, the ninth, the eleventh hour referred to the same thing, for those hours make up the number of 30. that St. Paul often mentions these *Æons* and the productions of them; that the duodecade of *Æons* was implied in our Saviours disputing with the Doctors at 12. years of Age, and in the choice of the 12. Apostles: and the remaining 18. by his abiding 18. months as they said with his Disciples after his resurrection: and where ever in Scripture they met with words suitable to the description of their *Æons*, they pretended

th

that they did refer to their notions, but were obscurely expressed on purpose : for which end they made use of Parables, and the first of St. John and many passages in St. Pauls Epistles. What course now doth Irenaus take to clear the sense of Scripture in these controverted places? Doth he tell them that God had appointed Infallible Guides in his Church, to whom appeal was to be made in all such cases? Nothing like it, through his whole Book ; but he argues with very good reason that no such thing as they imagined could be intended by the Scripture.

I. From the scope and design of the Scripture, which ought chiefly to be regarded ; whereas they only took some particular passages which served most to their purpose, without looking to the series of the discourse wherein they were. “ Therefore saith he, “ they make only a rope of sand, when they “ apply the Parables of our Saviour, or the “ sayings of the Prophets or Apostles to their “ opinions ; for they pass over the order and “ connexion of the Scriptures ; and as much “ as in them lyes loose the members of truth *Iren. l. i.* “ from each other ; and then transform and *c. i.* “ change them from one thing to another, “ thereby deceiving men. As if, saith he, “ a man should take an excellent Image of a “ Prince, done with a great deal of art in pre-
“ tious

" tious stones; and remove those stones out
 " of their proper places and turn them into
 " the shape of a Dog or a Fox, ill put toge-
 " ther, and should then affirm, that because
 " the stones are the same, that this Image of
 " a Dog or a Fox, was the Image of the
 " Prince made by such an excellent Artist:
 " after the very same way, saith he, do
 " they use the Scriptures. Or as he after-
 " wards expresseth it, they take several
 " words and names here and there, and put
 " them together, much after the way of those
 " who would apply the words of *Homer* to
 " any argument proposed to them; which
 " some have done so artificially, that un-
 " skilful men have been perswaded that *Ho-*
 " *mer* did mean that very thing when he
 " wrote his Poem. As one did the going
 " of *Hercules* to *Cerberus* so exactly in the
 " words of *Homer*, (put together in the
 " *Greek* fragments of *Irenaus*,) that those
 " who did not consider upon what different
 " occasions those words were used by him,
 " some being spoken of *Ulysses*, some of
 " *Priamus*, some of *Menelaus*, and *Agamem-*
 " *memnon*, and some of *Hercules*, might
 " Imagine that the Poet intended to describe
 " what the other expressed by him. But he
 " that will examine the several places will find
 " that the words indeed are *Homers*, but the
 " sense

sense his that so applyed them. So it is in this case, the words are the Scriptures, but applyed quite in another way, than they were intended; the stones are the same, but yet the Image of the Fox is not to be taken for that of the Prince: and when he hath taken the pains to put every thing in its proper and due place, he will then easily find out the deceit. And by the help of this rule *Irenaeus* vindicates the places of Scripture, which the *Valentinians* made use of; and makes it evident that could not be the sense of them which they put upon them. As he doth particularly prove that St. *John* by the beginning of his Gospel could not mean the first *Ogdoad* of the *Valentinians*. To the very same purpose doth *Tertullian* argue against their way of interpreting Scripture; "That although it seems to have wit and easiness in it, yet it is no more than is often practised on *Virgil* and *Homer* as well as the Scriptures. For we have seen *Virgil*, saith he, with the same words turned quite to another sense; as *Hosidius Geta* made the Tragœdy of *Medea*, out of *Virgil*, (some fragments whereof are still extant) and one had explained *Cebes* his Table in *Virgil's* words; and many had applyed the words of *Homer* in their *Cento's* to different purposes, and not only some

*Tertull. de
prescrip. 1
barit. c. 39.*

*Pet. Scri-
verii frag-
mata vv.
Tragicorum.
p. 187.*

Isidor. O-
igin. l. 1.
c. 38.

some of late, but *Isidore* saith, that *Proba* and
Pomponius before his time had made *Virgil*
Evangelize. "Therefore it is no wonder,
"saith *Tertullian*, that the Scripture
"should be so abused, it being much more
"fruitful, and applicable to several pur-
"poses than other Writings are. Nay saith
"he, I am not afraid to say, that the Scri-
"ptures were so framed by the Will of God,
"that they might afford matter for Hereticks
"to work upon; since I read that there must
"be heresies, which cannot be without
"the Scripture. And surely then, he did
not Imagine that God had appointed an infalli-
ble Judge on purpose to prevent the being of
Heresies, by giving an infallible sense of Scri-
pture.

Iren. l. 2.
c. 46.

2. From the repugnancy of the sense they
gave to other places of Scripture. "*Irenaeus*
"observes, that the Hereticks delighted
"most in dark places, and left the plain ones
"whereas we ought most to rely upon the
"plain places and by them interpret the
"obscure. For such who loved God and the
"truth would study most those things which
"God put under our command and know-
"ledge: and those are things which are plain
"before our eyes, and are open and without
"ambiguity laid down in Scriptures, and
"to these Parables and dark places ought

be fitted, and by this means they may be
 interpreted without danger, and of all
 alike, and the body of truth remains entire
 with a suitableness of all its parts. But
 without this every man interprets as he
 pleases, and there will be no certain rule
 of Truth; but every interpretation will be
 according to the opinion of the Interpreter,
 and men will contradict each other as the
 Philosophers did. And by this means
 men will be always seeking and never fin-
 ding because they cast away the means of
 finding. Seeing therefore, saith he, that
 all the Scriptures both Prophetical and
 Evangelical are plain and clear, and may
 be heard alike of all: they must be very
 blind that will not see in so great light, but
 darken themselves in Parables, wherein
 every one of them thinks he hath found a
 God of his own. And from hence he very
 much blames the Hereticks, since they
 could not so much as pretend that any thing
 was plainly said for them in Scripture,
 but only intimated in dark sayings and pa-
 rables, that they would leave that which
 is certain and undoubted and true, for that
 which was uncertain and obscure. Which,
 he saith, is not to build the house upon
 the firm and strong rock; but upon the
 uncertainty of the sand; on which it may
 be

"be easily overturned. This excellent rule for
 "interpreting Scripture *Irenaeus* makes great
 "use of in his following discourse, and in the
 "very next Chapter urges this as the Conse-
 "quence of it, that having truth for our Rule,
 "and so plain Testimony of God, men ought
 "not to perplex themselves with doubtful
 "Questions concerning God, but grow in
 "the love of him who hath done and doth for
 "great things for us, and never fall off from
 "that knowledge which is most clearly reveal-
 "ed. And we ought to be content with what
 "is clearly made known in the Scriptures, be-
 "cause they are perfect, as coming from the
 "word and Spirit of God. And we need not
 "wonder if there be many things in Religion
 "above our understandings, since there are so
 "in natural things which are daily seen by us
 "as in the nature of Birds, Water, Air,
 "Meteors, &c. of which we may talk much,
 "but only God knows what the truth is. There-
 "fore why should we think much if it be so in
 "Religion too: wherein are some things we
 "may understand and others we must leave to
 "God, and if we do so we shall keep our
 "faith without danger. And all Scripture be-
 "ing agreeable to itself, the dark places must
 "be understood in a way most suitable to the
 "sense of the plain.

3. The sense they gave of Scripture was
 contrary to the Doctrine of faith received by
 all true Christians from the beginning: *Irenæ, l. I.*
 which he calls "the unmoveable rule of *c. 1.*
 faith received in Baptism; and which the
 Church dispersed over the Earth did equal- *C. 2.*
 ly receive in all places; with a wonderful
 consent. For although the places and *C. 3.*
 languages be never so distant or different
 from each other, yet the faith is the very
 same, as there is one Sun which inlightens
 the whole World; which faith none did
 enlarge or diminish. And after having
 shewn the great absurdities of the Doctrines
 of the Enemies of this faith, in his first and
 second Books, in the beginning of the
 third he shews that the Apostles did fully *L. 3. c. 1.*
 understand the mind of Christ, that they
 preached the same Doctrine which the
 Church received, and which, after their
 preaching it, was committed to writing by
 the will of God in the Scriptures, to be
 the pillar and ground of Faith. Which
 was the true reason why the Hereticks did *C. 4.*
 go about to disparage the Scriptures be-
 cause they were condemned by them:
 therefore they would not allow them suffi-
 cient Authority, and charged them with
 contradictions, and so great obscurity that
 the truth could not be found in them with-

- "out the help of Tradition, which they ac-
 "counted the key to unlock all the difficulties
 "of Scripture. And was not to be sought
 "for in Writings, but was delivered down
 "from hand to hand, for which cause St.
 "Paul said we speak wisdom among them
 "that are perfect. Which wisdom they
 "pretended to be among themselves. On
 "this account the matter of Tradition came
 "first into dispute in the Christian Church.
 C. 3. "and *Irenæus* appeals to the most eminent
 "Churches and Especially that of *Rome*
 "because of the great resort of Christians
 "thither, whether any such tradition was
 "ever received among them and all the
 "Churches of *Asia* received the same faith
 "from the Apostles, and knew of no such
 C. 4. "Tradition as the *Valentinians* pretended
 "to. And there was no reason to think
 "that so many Churches, founded by the
 "Apostles or Christ, should be ignorant of
 "such a tradition; and supposing no Scrip-
 "tures at all had been written by the A-
 "postles, we must then have followed the
 "Tradition of the most ancient and Aposto-
 "lical Churches, and even the most Barba-
 "rous nations that had embraced Christiani-
 "ty without any Writings: yet fully agree
 "with other Churches in the Doctrine of
 "Faith, for that is it he means by the rule of
 "faith

faith, viz. a summary comprehension of
 the Doctrine received among Christians,
 such as the Creed is mentioned by *Irenæus*; L. 1. c. 2;
 and afterwards he speaks of the *Rule* of the
Valentinians in opposition to that of the sound L. 4. Pra²
 Christians. From hence *Irenæus* proceeds fat.
 to confute the Doctrine of the *Valentinians*
 by Scripture and Reason in the third, fourth L. 5. Pra²
 and fifth Books: All which ways of finding fat.
 out the sense of Scripture in doubtful places,
 we allow of and approve, and are always
 ready to appeal to them in any of the mat-
 ters controverted between us and the Church
 of Rome. But *Irenæus* knew nothing of
 any Infallible Judge to determine the sense
 of Scripture; for if he had, it would have
 been very strange he should have gone so
 much the farthest way about, when he
 might so easily have told the *Valentinians*
 that God had entrusted the Guides of his
 Church, especially at Rome, with the fa-
 culty of interpreting Scripture, and that
 all men were bound to believe that to be the
 sense of it which they declared, and no other.
 But men must be pardoned if they do not
 write that which never entred into their
 Heads. After *Irenæus*, *Tertullian* sets him-
 self the most to dispute against those who
 opposed the *Faith* of the Church; and

the method he takes in his *Book of Prescriptions of Hereticks* is this.

Tertull. de
prescrip.
harit. c. 8.

1. That there must be a certain unalterable *Rule of Faith*. "For he that believes, doth
"not only suppose sufficient grounds for his
"faith, but bounds that are set to it; and there-
"fore there is no need of further search since
"the Gospel is revealed. This he speaks to
C. 9. "take away the pretence of the *Seekers* of those
"days, who were always crying, *seek and ye*
"shall find: to which he replies, that we are to
"consider not the bare words, but the reason
"of them; And in the first place we are to
"suppose this, that there is one certain and fixed
"Doctrine delivered by Christ which all na-
"tions are bound to believe, and therefore to
"seek, that when they have found they may
"believe it. Therefore all our enquiries are to
C. 13. "be confined within that compass; what that
"Doctrine was, which Christ delivered: for
"otherwise there will be no end of seeking.

2. "He shews what this *Rule of Faith* is, by
"repeating the Articles of the Ancient Creed
"which he saith was universally received
"among true Christians and disputed by none
C. 13. "but Hereticks. Which *Rule of Faith* being
"embraced, then he saith, a liberty is allowed
"for other enquiries in doubtful or obscure
C. 14. "matters. For faith lyes in the Rule; but other
"things

things were matters of skill and curiosity; and
 it is faith which saves men, and not their skill
 in expounding Scriptures : and while men
 keep themselves within that Rule, they are
 safe enough, for to know nothing beyond it,
 is to know all.

3. *But they pretend Scripture for what they deliver, and by that means unsettle the minds of many.* To this he answers several ways.

1. "That such persons as those were, ought
 not to be admitted to a dispute concerning
 the sense of Scripture; because they rather
 deserved to be censured than disputed,
 for bringing such new heresies into the
 Church; but chiefly because it was to no
 purpose to dispute with them about the sense
 of Scripture, who received what Scrip-
 tures they pleased themselves, and added
 and took away as they thought fit. And
 what can the most skilful men in the Scri-
 pture do with such men, who deny or
 affirm what they please? therefore such
 kind of disputes tended to no good at all,
 where either side charged the other with
 forging and perverting the Scriptures, and
 so the Controversie with them, was not to
 be managed by the Scriptures, by which ei-
 ther none, or an uncertain Victory was to be
 obtained.

C. 16.

C. 17.

C. 13.

2. "In this dispute about the sense of
 "Scripture, the true Ancient faith is first to
 "be enquired after, for among whom that
 "was, there would appear to be the true
 C. 19. "meaning of Scripture. And for finding
 "out the true faith, we are to remember
 "that, Christ sent abroad his Apostles to
 "plant Churches in every City, from whence
 "other Churches did derive the faith, which
 C. 20. "are called Apostolical from their agreement
 "in this common faith at first delivered by
 "the Apostles; that, the way to under
 C. 21. "stand this Apostolical faith is to have re
 "course to the Apostolical Churches; for
 "it is unreasonable to suppose that the Apo
 "stles should not know the Doctrine of
 C. 22. "Christ, (which he at large proves) o
 C. 23. "that they did not deliver to the Churches
 C. 24. "planted by them the things which they
 C. 25. "knew; or that the Churches misunderstood
 C. 26. "the Doctrine because all the Christian
 C. 27. "Churches were agreed in one Common
 C. 28. "faith: and therefore there is all the reason
 "to believe that so universal consent must
 "arise from some common cause, which ca
 "be supposed to be no other than the com
 "mon delivery of it by all the Apostles. But
 "the Doctrines of the Hereticks were not
 C. 29. "and upstart, and we must say all the for
 "mer Christians were baptized into a false
 "faith

faith, as not knowing the true God or the true Christ, if *Marcion* and *Valentinus* did deliver the true Doctrine, but that which is first is true and from God, that which comes after is forraign and false. If *Marcion* and *Valentinus*, *Nigidius* or *Hermogenes* broach new opinions and set up other expositions of Scripture than the Christian Church hath received from the Apostles times, that without any farther proof, discovers their imposture.

C 30.

3. Two senses directly contrary to each other cannot proceed from the same Apostolical persons. This *Tertullian* likewise insists upon to shew that although they might pretend Antiquity, and that as far as the Apostolical times, yet the contrariety of their Doctrine to that of the Apostles would sufficiently manifest the falshood of it. For saith he, "the Apostles would never contradict each other or themselves; and if the Apostolical persons had contradicted them, they had not been joyned together in the Communion of the same faith; which all the Apostolical Churches were. But the Doctrines broached by these men, were in their seeds condemned by the Apostles themselves; so *Marcion*, *Apelles*, and *Valentinus* were confuted in the *Sadducees*, and first corrupters of Christianity. But the

C. 31.

C. 33.

- "the true Christians could not be charged
 "by their Adversaries with holding any thing
 "contrary to what the Church received from
 "the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ,
 "and Christ from God. For the succession
 C. 36. "of the Churches was so evident, and the
 C. 37. "*Chairs* of the *Apostles* so well known, that
 "any one might satisfie his curiosity about their
 "Doctrine, especially since their authentick
 "Epistles are still preserved therein. But
 "where a diversity of Doctrine was found from
 "the Apostles, that was sufficient evidence
 "of a false sense that was put upon the
 "Scriptures. Thus *Tertullian* lays down the
 rules of finding out the sense of controverted
 places of Scripture, without the least insinua-
 tion of any infallibility placed in the Guides of
 the Church for determining the certain sense of
 them.

But lest by this way of *Prescribing* against
Hereticks, he should seem to decline the me-
 rits of the cause out of distrust of being able
 to manage it against them, he tells us there-
 fore elsewhere he would set aside the ground
 of *prescription*, or just exception against
 their pleading, (for so *prescription* signifies
 in him) as against *Marcion* and *Hermogenes*
 and *Praxeas*, and refute their opinions upon
 other grounds. In his Books against *Marcion*

he first lays down *Marcions rule*, as he calls it,
i. e. the sum of his opinion, which was making
 the Creator of the World, and the Father of
 our Lord Jesus Christ two distinct Gods,
 the one nothing but goodness, and the other,
 the Author of evil : which opinion he over-
 throws from principles of reasons, because
 there cannot be "two infinitely great, and
 "on the same grounds he makes two he may
 "make many more, and because God must
 "be known by his works, and he could not be
 "God that did not create the World; and
 "so continues arguing against *Marcion* to
 "the end of the first Book. In the second
 "he vindicates God the Creator from all the
 "objections which *Marcion* had mustered
 "against his goodness. In the third he
 "proves that Christ was the Son of God the
 "Creator; first by reason and then by Scri-
 "pture, and lays down two rules for under-
 "standing the Prophetical predictions relat-
 "ing to the manner of expressing future things
 "as past, and the ænigmatical way of re-
 "presenting plain things : afterwards he
 "proves in the same manner from Scripture
 "and Reason, that Christ did truly assume
 "our nature and not meerly in appearance;
 "which he demonstrates from the death and
 "resurrection of Christ and from the evidence
 "of sense; and makes that sufficient evidence
 "of

Tertull. c.

Mar. l. 1.

c. 2.

C. 4, 5, 6.

C. 11, 12.

L. 3. c. 5;

C. 8. 9.

- “of the truth of a body that it is the object of
 “three senses, of sight, and touch and hearing.
 Which is the same way of arguing we make use
 of against Transubstantiation, and if *Marcion*
 had been so subtle to have used the Evasions
 those do in the *Roman* Church, he might have
 defended the putative body of Christ in the
 very same manner that they do the being of ac-
 cidents without a substance. “In the fourth
 “Book he asserts against *Marcion* the Autho-
 rity of the Gospel received in the Christian
 Church above that which *Marcion* allowed,
 “by the greater Antiquity and the Universal
 “reception of the true Gospels; and after re-
 futes the supposition of a twofold Christ one
 “for the Jews and another for the Gentiles
 “from the comparing of Scriptures together,
 “which he doth with great diligence and an-
 swers all the arguments from thence, brought
 “by *Marcion*, to prove that Christ was an
 “enemy to the Law of *Moses*. In his fifth
 “and last Book he proves out of the Epistles
 “of *St. Paul*, allowed by *Marcion*, that he
 “preached no other God than the Creator,
 “and that Christ was the Son of God the
 “Creator; which he doth from the scope and
 circumstances of the places without apprehend-
 ing the least necessity of calling in any Infalli-
 ble Guides to give the certain sense and meaning
 of them.

Against *Hermogenes*, he disputes about the eternity of matter; the Controversie between them he tells us was concerning the sense of some places of Scripture, which relate to the Creation of things; *Tertullian* proves "that all things were made of no-thing, because it is not mentioned out of what they were made; *Hermogenes* proves they were made out of matter; because it is not said they were made of nothing. To determine therefore the sense of these places *Tertullian* shews from reason the repugnancy of the eternity of matter to the attributes of God: he compares several places of Scripture together, he reasons from the manner of the expressions and the Idiom of Scripture. I adore, saith he, the fulness of the Scripture which shews me both the maker and the thing made; but the Gospel likewise discovers by whom all things were made. But the Scripture no where saith that all things were made out of matter. Let the shop of *Hermogenes* shew where it is written; and if it be not written let him fear the wo denounced to those who add or take from what is written. He examines the several places in dispute, and by proving that sense which *Hermogenes* put upon them to be repugnant to reason, (as he shews to the end of that Book) he concludes

*Tertull. ad-
versus Her-
mog. c. 19.*

C. 20. 21;
22.

cludes his sense of Scripture to be false and erroneous.

Against *Praxeas*, he disputes whether God the Father took our nature upon him, and the arguments on both sides are drawn from the *Scriptures*; but, *Tertullian* well observes, that they insisted upon two or three places of Scripture, and would make all the rest though far more, to yield to them. Whereas as the fewer places ought to be understood according to the sense of the greater number. But this saith he, is the property of all Hereticks because they can find but few places for them, they defend the smaller number against the greater: which is against the nature of a rule, wherein the first and the most, ought to oversway the latter and the fewer. And therefore he sets himself throughout that Book to produce the far greater number of places of *Scripture*, which do assert the distinction between the Father and the Son; and consequently that it could not be the Father who suffered for us.

Hitherto we find nothing said of an infallible Guide to give the certain sense of Scripture, when the fairest occasion was offered, by those who disputed the most concerning the sense of Scripture in the Age wherein they lived, viz. by *Irenaeus* and *Tertullian*.

I now

I now proceed to *Clemens of Alexandria* clem. Alex. and. Strom. 7. who in his learned *Collections*, proposes that objection, against Christianity, that there were many Heresies among Christians, and therefore men could believe nothing. To which he answers, "That there were Heresies among the Jews and Philosophers; and that objection was not thought sufficient against *Judaism* or Philosophy, and therefore ought not to be against Christianity. Besides the coming of Heresies was foretold, and what ever is foretold must come to pass. The *Physicians*, saith he, differ in their opinions, yet men do not neglect to make use of them, when they are sick. Heresies should only make men more careful what they choose. Men ought thereby to endeavour the more to find out truth from falshood; as if two sorts of fruit be offered to a man real, and waxen; will a man abstain from both, because one is Counterfeit, or rather find out the true from the apparent? When several ways offer themselves for a man to go in, he ought not therefore to sit down and not stir a step further; but he uses the best means to find out the true way and then walks in it. So that they are justly condemned who do not discern the true from the false; for they who will, saith he, may find out the truth.

"truth. For either there is demonstration
 "or not; all grant demonstration, or evi-
 "dence, who do not destroy our senses; If
 "there be demonstration there must be
 "search and enquiry made; and by the Scri-
 "ptures we may demonstratively learn how
 "Heresies fell off, and that the exactest
 "knowledge was to be found in the truth and
 "the ancient Church. Now the true
 "searchers will not leave till they find Evi-
 "dence from the Scripture. To this end,
 "he commands the exercise of mens reason
 "and understanding, impartiality or laying
 "aside opinion, a right disposition of Soul,
 "for when men are given over to their lusts
 "they endeavour to wrest the Scriptures to
 "them. But he establishes the Scripture as
 "the only principle of certainty to Christians,
 "and more credible than any demonstration:
 "which who so have tasted are called faith-
 "ful, but those who are versed in them are
 "the truly knowing men. The great ob-
 "jection now is, *that Hereticks make use of*
Scripture too: I but they, faith he, reject what
 they please, and do "not follow the Body
 "and Contexture of Prophecy; but take
 "ambiguous expressions and apply them to
 "their own opinions: and a few scattered
 "phrases, without regarding the sense and im-
 "portance of them. For in the Scriptures

"pro-

"produced by them, you may find them either
 "making use of meer names, and changing
 "the significations of them; never attending
 "to the scope and intention of them. But
 "truth, saith he, doth not lye in the change
 "of the signification of words (for by that
 "means all Truth may be overthrown) but in
 "considering what is proper and perfectly
 "agreeable to our Lord and Almighty God,
 "and in confirming every thing which is
 "demonstrated by the Scripture out of the
 "same Scriptures. Wherein *Clemens Alex-*
andrinus lays down such rules as he thought
 necessary to find out the certain sense of Scri-
 pture; *viz.* by considering the scope and co-
 herence of the words, the proper sense and
 importance of them, the comparing of Scri-
 pture with Scripture, and the Doctrine
 drawn from it with the nature and properties of
 God, all which are excellent Rules, without
 the least intimation of the necessity of any In-
 fallible Interpreter to give the certain sense of
 doubtful places.

After this time a great dispute arose in the
 Church about the rebaptizing *Hereticks*, ma-
 naged by the *Eastern* and *African* Bishops
 against *Stephen* Bishop of *Rome*. Here the
 Question was about the sense of several places
 of Scripture, and the practice of the Apo-
 stles; as appears by the *Epistles* of *Cyprian*
 and

Cyprian. Epist. 74.
Firmilian. inter epist. Cyprian. 75.

Baronius. Annal. ad A. D. 258.
n. 36.
n. 52.

Eusebius. l. 7.
6. 5.

Concil Arles. lat. I. c. 8.

and *Firmilian*; both parties pleading Scripture and Tradition for themselves. But no such thing as an infallibility in judgment was pleaded by the *Pope*, nor any thing like it in the least acknowledged by his Adversaries, who charge him, (without any respect to his Infallible guidship,) with pride, error, rashness, impertinency, and contradicting himself. Which makes *Baronius* very Tragically exclaim: and although he makes use of this as a great argument of the prevalency of Tradition, because the opinion of *Stephen* obtained in the Church; yet there is no Evidence at all that any Churches did submit to the opinion of *Stephen* when he declared himself, but as appears by *Dionysius* of *Alexandria's* Epistles, the Controversie continued after his time; and if we look into the judgment of the Church in following Ages, we shall find that neither *Stephens* opinion, nor his Adversaries were followed; (for *Stephen* was against rebaptizing any *Hereticks*, and the others were for rebaptizing all, because one Baptism was only in the true Church:) For in the 19. Canon of the Council of *Nice* the *Samosatenian Baptism* is pronounced null; and the persons who received it are to be newly Baptized; and the first Council of *Arles* decrees, that in case of *Heresie* men are to receive new Baptism but not otherwise: The

second

second Council of *Arles* puts a distinction between Hereticks ; decreeing *that the Photinians and Samosatenians should be Baptized again ; but not the Bonosiaci nor the Arians, but they were to be received upon renouncing their Heresie without Baptism.* Which seems the harder to understand since the *Bonosiaci* were no other than *Photinians*. The most probable way of solving it is, that these two latter sorts did preserve the form of Baptism entire ; but the *Photinians* and *Samosatenians* altered it : which St. *Augustin* saith, is a thing to be believed. So *Gennadius* reports it, that those who were Baptized without invocation of the *B. Trinity*, were to be Baptized upon their reception into the Church (not rebaptized because the former was accounted null) of these he reckons not only the *Paulianists* and *Photinians*, but the *Bonosiaci* too and many others. But St. *Basil* determines the case of Baptism, not from the *form* but from the *faith* which they professed ; a Schismatical Baptism he saith, was allowed, but not *Heretical*, by which he means such as denied the *Trinity* ; and therein he saith, *S. Cyprian* and *Firmilian* were to blame, because they would allow no Baptism among persons separated from the Communion of the Church. The Council of *Laodicea* de-

Council A e-
lat. 2. c. 16,
17.

Aug. de He-
res. cap. 44.

Genad. de
Eccles. dog.
mat. c. 32.

Basil Epist.
Cap. 1. ad
Aneph. 6. 11.

Council Laod-
icea. c. 7, 8.

Quarto-decimans were to be received without new Baptism, but not the Montanists, or Cataphryges : but *Binius* saith there was one Copy, wherein the *Photinians* were left out; and then these Canons may agree with the rest; and *Baronius* asserts that the greater number of M. S. Copies leave out *Photinians*.

Baron. Annal. To 7. 4
in Append.

And withal he proves, that the Church did never allow the Baptism of the *Photinians*, though it did of the *Arians*; by which we see that the Church afterwards did not follow that which *Stephen* pretended to be an Apostolical tradition, viz. that no Hereticks should be rebaptized; and from hence we may conclude that the Pope was far from being thought an infallible Guide or Interpreter of Scripture, either by that, or succeeding Ages; when not only single persons that were eminent Guides of the Church (such as the *African* and *Eastern* Bishops were,) opposed his Doctrine, and slighted his excommunications, but several Councils called both in the East and Africa, and the most eminent Councils of the Church afterwards (such as the first of *Arles* and *Nice*) decreed contrary to what he declared to be an Apostolical Tradition.

In the same Age we meet with another great Controversie about the sense of Scripture, for *Paulus Samosatenus* openly denyed the Divinity of Christ and asserted the Doctrine

of it to be repugnant to *Scripture*, and the ancient Apostolical tradition. For this *Paulus* revived the heresie of *Artemon*; whose followers, as appears by the fragment of an ancient Writer against them in *Eusebius*, (supposed to be *Caius*) pleaded that the Apostles were of their mind, and that their Doctrine continued in the Church till the time of *Victor*, and then it began to be corrupted. Which saith that Writer would seem probable, if the holy Scriptures did not first contradict them; and the Books of several Christians before *Victors* time. So that we see the main of the Controversie did depend upon the sense of Scripture which was pleaded on both sides. But what course was taken in this important Controversie to find out the certain sense of Scripture? Do they appeal to any infallible Guides? Nothing like it. But in the *Councils* of *Antioch*, in the writings of *Dionysius* of *Alexandria* and others since, they who opposed the *Samo-satenian* Doctrine endeavoured with all their strength to prove that to be the true sense of Scripture, which asserted the Divinity of Christ. It is great pity the dispute of *Malchion* with *Paulus* is now lost, which was extant in *Eusebius* his time; but in the Questions and Answers between *Paulus* and *Dionysius*; (which *Valesius* without reason su-

*Epiph. an.
barej. 65.
Eusebii Ec-
clesi. histor.
l. 5. c. 18.*

*Vales. not
ad Euseb.
l. 7. c. 35.*

spects since St. *Hierome* mentions his Epistle against *Paulus*) the dispute was about the true sense of Scripture which both pleaded for themselves. *Paulus* insists on those places, which speak of the humane infirmities of Christ, which he saith prove that he was meer "Man and not God; the other answers "that these things were not inconsistent with "the Being of the Divine nature, since expressions implying humane passions are attributed to God in Scripture: But he proves "from multitude of Scriptures, and reasons "drawn from them, that the divine nature is "attributed to Christ, and therefore the other "places which seem repugnant to it, are to "be interpreted in a sense agreeable thereto. The same course is likewise taken by *Epi- phanius* against this heresie: who saith, "the "Christians way of answering difficulties was "not from their own reasons, but from the scope "and consequence of Scripture: and particularly adds, that the Doctrine of the Trinity "was carefully delivered in the Scriptures, because God foresaw the many heresies which "would arise about it.

But never any Controversie about the sense of Scripture disturbed the Church more, than that which the *Arians* raised; and if ever any had reason to think of some certain and infallible way of finding out the sense of Scri-

Epi-phan.
heret. 64.
sect. 5.

sect. 6.

pture

pure the Catholick Christians of that Age
 had. I shall therefore give an account of what
 way the best Writers of the Church in that
 time took to find out the sense of Scripture
 in the Controverted places. Of all the Wri-
 ters against them, *Athanasius* hath justly the
 greatest esteem, and *Petavins* saith that God
 inspired him with greater skill in this Con-
 troversie, than any others before him. The
 principle he goes upon in all his disputes
 against the *Arians*, is this, *that our true faith*
is built upon the Scriptures, so in several
 places of his conference with the *Arian* and
 in the beginning of his Epistle to *Jovianus*
 and elsewhere. Therefore in the entrance of
 his *Disputations* against the *Arians*, he ad-
 viseth all that would secure themselves from
 the " impostures of Hereticks, to study the
 " Scriptures; because those who are versed
 " therein stand firm against all their assaults;
 " but they who look only at the words, with-
 " out understanding the meaning of them are
 " easily seduced by them. And this Coun-
 sel he gives, after the Council of *Nice* had
 decreed the *Arian* Doctrine to be *Heresie*;
 and although " he saith, other wayes may
 " be used to confute it, yet because the Holy
 " Scripture is more sufficient than all of
 " them, therefore those who would be bet-
 " ter instructed in these things, I would ad-

Athanas.
Cont. Arian.
Ora. 1.
p. 287.

“use them to be conversant in the Divine
 “Oracles. But did not the Arians plead
*Scripture as well as they? how then could
 the Scripture end this Controversie, which
 did arise about the sense of Scripture?* This
 objection, which is now made so much of
 against the Scriptures, was never so much
 as thought of in those days; or if it were, was
 not thought worth answering; for they did
 not in the least desert the proofs of Scripture,
 because their Adversaries made use of it too.
 But they endeavoured to shew that their Ad-
 versaries Doctrine had no solid Foundation
 in Scripture, but theirs had, *i. e.* that the
Arians perverted it, because they did not
 examine and compare places as they ought
 to do, but run away with a few words,
 without considering the scope and design of
 them; or comparing them with places plainer
 than those were which they brought. Thus
 when the *Arians* objected that place, *My Fa-
 ther is greater than I*, *Athanasius* bids them
 compare that with other places, such as *My
 Father and I are one*, and *who being in the
 form of God thought it no robbery to be equal
 with God*; and *by him all things were made*
 &c. When *Arius* objected, *to us there is
 but one God of whom are all things*, he tells
 him, he ought to consider the following
 words, *and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom*

*Atho. Cont.
 Arian. d'f-
 p. 116.
 &c.*

are all things; from whence when *Arius* argued that *Christ* was only *Gods instrument* in creating things, *Athanasius* then bids him compare this place with another, where it is said of whom the whole body, &c. Not barely *Eph. 4. 16.* *But* *is*. When the *Arians* objected, *Christs* saying, all things are delivered to me from my Father, *Athanasius* opposes that place of *St. John* to it, By him all things were made. Thus when they objected several other places, he constantly hath recourse to *John* 1. 1, 2, 3. to *Phil.* 2. 7. 1 *John* 5. 20. and others which he thought the plainest places for *Christs* eternal Divinity; and by these he proves that the other were to be interpreted, with a respect to his humane nature, and the State he was in upon Earth. So that the greatest Defender of the Doctrine of the Trinity against the *Arians* saw no necessity at all of calling in the Assistance of any infallible Guides, to give the certain sense of Scripture in these doubtful places; but he thought the Scripture plain enough to all those who would impartially examine it; and for others who wilfully shut their eyes, no light could be great enough for them. Indeed, when the *Arians* called in the help of any of the Ancient Writers to justify their Doctrine, then *Athanasius* thought himself concerned to vindicate them; as particularly

Athas. de
sent. Diony-
si C. A. ian.
p. 549.

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*Athanas. de
sent. Diony-
si C. A. ian.
p. 549.*

Dionysius of Alexandria. But, as he saith, if they can produce Scripture or Reason for what they say, let them do it; but if not, let them hold their peace: Thereby implying, that these were the only considerable things to be regarded: yet he shews at large, that they abused the Testimony of *Dionysius*, who although in his Letters against *Sabellius*, he spake too much the other way, yet in other of his Writings he sufficiently cleared himself from being a favourer of the *Arian* Heresie. And although *Athanasius* doth elsewhere say, that the Faith which the Catholick Church then held, was the faith of their Fore-fathers, and descended from the Apostles; yet, he nowhere saith, that without the help of that Tradition, it had been impossible to have known the certain sense of Scripture, much less without the infallible interpretation of the Guides of the present Church.

Athas. C-
rat. i. c.
Arian.
ad Adelph.
C. Paul.
Samosat. ep.
ad Ser. pi.

Hilar. de
Trinit. l. i.

S. Hilary in his disputes against the same Hereticks, professes in the beginning "That his intention was to confound their rage and ignorance out of writings of the Prophets and Apostles: and to that end desires of his Readers that they would conceive of God not according to the Laws of their own beings, but according to the greatness of what he had declared of himself. For he is the best Reader of Scripture, who doth not bring his sense

"to the Scripture, but takes it from it; and
 "doth not resolve before-hand to find that
 "there, which he concluded must be the sense
 "before he reads. In things therefore which
 "concern God, we must allow him to know
 "himself best, and give due Reverence to
 "his word. For he is the best witness to him-
 "self who cannot be known but by himself.
 In which words he plainly asserts that the
 Foundation of our Faith must be in the Scri-
 ptures, and that a free and impartial mind is
 necessary to find out the true sense of Scri-
 pture. And after he had said in the second
 Book, that Heresies arise from misunder-
 standing the Scripture, and charged in his
 fourth Book the *Arians* particularly with it,
 he proceeds to answer all the places produced
 by them out of the old and new Testament,
 by comparing several places together, and the
 antecedents and consequents, and by these
 means proving that they mistook the meaning
 of Scripture. So in the beginning of his
 ninth Book rehearsing the Common places,
 which were made use of by the *Arians*, he *Hilar. l. 9;*
 saith, "they repeated the words alone, with-
 "out enquiring into the meaning, or Con-
 "texture of them; whereas the true sense of
 "Scripture is to be taken from the antece-
 "dents and consequents: their fundamental
 "mistake being the applying those things to
 "his

his Divine nature, which were spoken of
his humane : which he makes good by a
particular examination of the several places in
Controversie.

The same course is taken by *Epiphanius*,
Phabadius and others of the ancient Writers
of the Church, who asserted the Eternal
Divinity of Christ against the *Arians*. *Epiphanius* therefore charges them with man-
Epiph. heres. 69. f. 50 gling and perverting the sense of Scripture;
understanding figurative expressions literally,
and those which are intended in a plain sense
figuratively.

So that it is observable in that great Con-
troversie which disturbed the Church so many
years, which exercised the wits of all men
in that time to find out a way to put an end
to it, after the Guides of the Church had in
the Council of *Nice* declared what was the
Catholick faith : yet still the Controversie
was managed about the sense of Scripture,
and no other ways made use of for finding it
than such as we plead for at this day. It is
a most incredible thing, that in a time of so
violent contention, so horrible confusion
so scandalous divisions in the Christian
Church, none of the Catholick Bishops
should once suggest this admirable Expedient
of Infallibility. But this *Palladium* was not
then fallen down from heaven, or if it were

it was kept so secret, that not one of the Writers of the Christian Church in that busy and disputing Age discovered the least knowledge of it. Unless it be said that of all times it was then least fit to talk of *Infallibility* in the *Guides* of the Church, when they so frequently in Councils contradicted each other. The *Synodical Book* in the new Tomes of the Councils, reckons up 31. several Councils of Bishops in the time of the *Arian* Controversie, whereof near 20, were for the *Arians*, and the rest against them. If the sense of Scripture were in this time to be taken from the *Guides* of the Church, what security could any man have against *Arianism*? since the Councils which favoured it, were more numerous than those which opposed and condemned it. Yea so mean was the opinion which some of the greatest persons of the Church at that time had of the *Guides* of the Church met together in Councils, that St. Gregory Nazianzen declares he had not seen a good issue of any one of them; but they rather increased mischief than removed any; because of the contention and ambition which ruled in them, therefore he resolved to come no more at any of them. What? had St. Gregory so mean an esteem of the *Guides* of the Christian Church to think that, ambition and contention should sway them in their Councils

Concil. General. Tom. 2. p. 84.

Greg. Nazian. Ep. 55.

*Bellar. de
Concil. Au-
thor. l. 2.
c. 7.*

*August. c.
Maxim. l.
3. c. 14.*

Councils and not the Spirit of God, which certainly rules not where the other do? Yet this he declares to be his mind upon consideration and experience in that time, and if he had lived to those blessed days of the Councils of latter Ages, with what zeal and Rhetorick would he have set them forth? Never was any answer more jejune to this Testimony than that of *Bellarmin*, viz. that forsooth *there could be no lawful Councils called in his time*; and why so I pray? was there not a good Authority to call them? But if that had been the reason, he did not so little understand the way of expressing himself, to assign the cause of it to *contention and ambition*, if he mean quite another thing which he doth not in the least intimate. And *what if he were afterwards present at the Council of Constantinople*? doth that shew, that his mind was in the least changed? but in this Epistle he declares, how little good was to be expected from a Council, and yet afterwards by the Emperours command he might be present at one. *St. Augustin* in dealing with *Maximinus* the *Arian* expressly sets aside all *Authority of the Guides of the Church, as to the sense of Scripture in the places controverted between them*; for he saith, *I will neither bring the Authority of the Council of Nice, neither shall you that of Ariminum*; but

but we will proceed by Authorities of Scripture that are common to both of us, and by the clearest Evidence of reason. It seems then St. *Augustin* was far from thinking that there could be no certainty of the sense of Scripture if the Authority of the *Guides* of the Church be set aside. But by what means doth he then think, that men may come to any certainty about the true meaning of Scripture? of that he is best able to give us an account himself having written purposely on this subject in his Books of Christian Doctrine, the substance of what he there says may be comprehended in these Rules.

1. "That the main scope of the Scripture is to perswade men to the Love of God and our Neighbour, without which, he *Aug. de Do-ctri. Chri- stian. l. 1. c. 35, 36.* faith, no man doth truly understand it; but whosoever interprets Scripture to the advancing of that; though he may be mistaken as to the sense of the words, yet his error is not dangerous.

2. "That in order to the right understanding of Scripture men must apply themselves to it with minds duly prepared for it; by a fear of God, humility, prayer, sincerity, and purity of heart. *L. 2. c. 7.*

3. "That all those things which are necessary to Salvation are plainly laid down in Holy Scriptures; This is in terms assert-
"ed

L. 2. c. 9. "ed by him, as a fundamental principle,
 "that in those things which are plainly set
 "down in Scripture, all things are to be
 "found which contain our faith and rule of
 "life. *i. e.* All things which are necessary
 "to the Love of God and our Neighbour, and
 "consequently to the making us happy. And
 "these things men ought especially to read
 "the Scriptures for; and the more they find
 "of them, the larger their understanding of
 "Scripture is.

4. "That the obscure places of Scripture
 "are to be understood by the plain. For
 "which end he requires frequent reading, and
 Ib. "using ones self to the language of Scriptures,
 "and drawing examples from plain places to
 L. 3. c. 26. "illustrate difficult, and those which are cer-
 "tain to clear the doubtful. For, scarce any
 L. 2. c. 6. "thing, saith he, is drawn out of the most diffi-
 "cult places, but what is very plainly set down
 "elsewhere.

5. "That in regard of the infinite variety
 "of Latin Interpreters (which it seems were in
 "his time) in matters of doubt it was ne-
 "cessary to have recourse to the Original
 L. 2. c. 10. "Hebrew and Greek : the knowledge of
 "which tongues might therefore be necessary
 "to the knowledge of Scripture, because
 "several words are preserved untranslated;
 "but those being few the necessity is not so
 "great

“great on their account, as the diversity of
 “Interpreters, for although those who had
 “translated the Hebrew into Greek might be
 “reckoned up, the Latin Interpreters could not.
 “Which diversity of translations doth rather
 “help than hinder the understanding of Scri-
 “pture, if the Readers of it be not negligent;
 “for some doubtful places are cleared by the
 “difference of readings.

C. 11.

6. “Where the ambiguity lyes in proper
 “words, the clearing of it depends on the cir-
 “cumstances of the place; in so much that
 “he determines, that it is a very rare and
 “difficult thing to find such an ambiguity in
 “the words of Scripture, which may not be
 “cleared from the intention of the Writer, or
 “comparing places, or searching the Original
 “Language.

L. 3. c. 4.

7. “Men must carefully distinguish be-
 “tween proper and figurative expressions; for
 “to understand figurative expressions lite-
 “rally is to subject our understanding to car-
 “nal conceptions of things: and that is,
 “saith he, a miserable slavery of mind, to
 “take signs for things; such signs he tells us
 “under the Gospel are the two Sacraments
 “of Baptism and the Lords supper. The
 “great difficulty herein, lyes in the finding
 “out the difference between proper and figu-
 “rative expressions, for which he lays down
 “this

L. 3. c.

C. 9.

"this rule, if the words of Scripture com-
 "mand what is good and forbid what is evil,
 C. 15, 16. "it is no figurative expression; but if it for-
 "bids what is good, or command any thing
 "that is evil, it must be figuratively under-
 "stood. For which he instances in those
 "words of our Saviour *unless ye eat the flesh*
 "*and drink the blood of the Son of man*
 "*ye shall have no life in you.* Which seeming
 "to command something evil, must be figu-
 "ratively understood of Communicating in
 "the Passion of Christ, and calling to mind
 "that his flesh was crucified and wounded for
 "us.

8. "There is no danger in different senses
 "being given of the same place of Scripture,
 "if every one of those senses appear by other
 L. 3. c. 26. "places to be agreeable to Truth: This being
 "supposed that the person do sincerely en-
 "quire after the sense of the Author; For,
 "saith he, that Divine Spirit might easily
 "foresee how many several senses those words
 "are capable of, which being agreeable to
 "other parts of Scripture, though not the parti-
 "cular meaning of those words, the mistake
 "cannot be dangerous therein.

9. "Where such a sense is given which can-
 "not be proved by other certain Testimonies
 "of Scripture, it must be made manifest to be
 L. 3. c. 28. "the sense by clear Evidence of Reason. But
 "he

“he rather approves the way of proving the
 “sense of Scripture by other places of Scri-
 “pture, where the interpretation is doubtful.
 So that the way in doubtful places “which
 “he prescribes is this, either to draw such a
 “sense from them as hath no dispute con-
 “cerning its being a true Proposition, or if
 “it have, that it be confirmed by other places
 “of Scripture.

Besides these, he layes down the seven rules
 of *Ticonius* the *Donatist* which are not of that
 consequence to be here repeated; that which
 I take notice of is, that *S. Augustin* thought
 the rules he gave sufficient for understanding
 the meaning of Scripture in doubtful places;
 but he doth not in the least mention the *In-*
fallibility of the *Guides of the Church* as a
 necessary means for that end. But he doth
 assert in as plain terms, as I have done, *that*
Scripture is plain in all necessities to Salva-
tion to any sober enquirer, and what ever
 consequences are charged upon me for making
 that a Fundamental principle,, must reflect
 as much upon *S. Augustin* as me; and I do
 not fear all the objections can be made against
 a principle so evident to reason, and so agree-
 able not only to *St. Augustin*, but the Doctrine
 of the Catholick Church both before and af-
 ter him.

The next after *S. Augustin* who hath pur-
 Q posely

Vincent.
Lirin. Com-
monitor p. 4.

posely writ of this argument about the sense of
Scripture is *Vincentius Lerinensis*: about four
years after *S. Augustins* death, and three after
the Council of *Ephesus*, who seems to attri-
bute more to the *Guides of the Church* than
S. Augustin doth, yet far enough short of
Infallibility. He saith, "That every man
ought to strengthen his faith against Heresie
by two things, first by the Authority of
the divine Law, and then by the Tradi-
tion of the Catholick Church: which tra-
dition he makes necessary, not by way of
addition to the Scripture, for he allows
the perfection and sufficiency of that for
all things; but only to interpret Scripture
by giving a certain sense of it, there being
such different opinions among men about
it. For all the Hereticks whom he there
names had different senses of Scripture, as
Novatianus, Sabellius, Donatus, Arius, Mace-
donius, Photinus, &c. But then he bounds
this tradition within the compass of the uni-
versal consent of Antiquity, as well as the
present Church; or as he expresseth it,
within those things which were believed
every where, alwayes, and by all persons.
That we may therefore consider how far
these rules of *Vincentius* will serve for ex-
plaining the sense of Scripture, we are to take
notice of the restrictions he layes upon them.

1. That

i. That they are to be taken together, and not one of them separate from the rest. As for instance, that of *Universality* in any one Age of the Church, being taken without the consent of *Antiquity*, is no sufficient rule, to interpret *Scripture* by. For *Vincentius* doth suppose that any one Age of the Church may be so overrun with Heresie, that there is no way to confute it, but by recourse to *Antiquity*. “ For in the case of the *Arian* heresie, he grants that almost the whole Church was overspread with it, and there was then no way left but to prefer the consent of *Antiquity* before a prevailing novelty. In some cases the Universal consent of the present Church is to be relyed upon against the attempts of particular persons, as in that of the *Donatists*; but then we are to consider, that *Antiquity* was still pleaded on the same side that *Universality* was, and supposing that all the Ancient Church from the Apostles times had been of the same mind with the *Donatists*, the greater number of the same Age opposing them, would have been no more cogent against them, than it was afterwards for the *Arians*. It is unreasonable to believe, that in a thing universally believed by all Christians from the Apostles times the Christian Church should be deceived; but it is quite another thing to say,

that the Church in any one or more Ages since the Apostles times may be deceived; especially if the Church be confined to one certain Communion excluding all others, and the persons in that Church have not libertie to deliver their opinions, for then it is impossible to know what the Judgement of the whole Church is. And so *universality* is not thought by *Vincentius* himself to be alone sufficient to determine the sense of Scripture; supposing that *universality* to be understood according to the honesty of the Primitive times *for a free and general consent* of the Christians of that Age in which a man lives; but since the great divisions of the Christian world, it is both a very hard matter to know the consent of Christendom in most of the Controverted places of Scripture, and withal the notion of *Universality* is debauched and corrupted, and made only to signify the consent of one great Faction, which is called by the name of the *Catholick Church*, but truly known by the name of *Roman*.

2. That great care and Judgement must be used in the applying those Rules; for

1. The consent of Antiquity is not equally evident in all matters in dispute, and therefore cannot be of equal use.

1. There are some things wherein we may be certain of such a consent, and that was in the

Rule

Rule of Faith, as *Vincentius* and most of the antient Writers call it, *i. e.* the summary comprehension of a Christians duty as to matters of faith, which was not so often called the *Symbol* as the *Rule of Faith*, that I mean which was delivered to persons, who were to be baptized and received into the Church, this the antient Church Universally agreed in as to the substance of it. And as to this *Vincentius* tells us his Rule is especially to be understood. "For, saith he, this content of Antiquity is not to be sought for in all questions that may arise about the sense of Scripture, but only, or at least chiefly in the Rule of Faith: or as he elsewhere explains himself, alone or chiefly in those Questions which concern the Fundamentals of the Catholick Doctrine: which were those contained in the Rule of Faith, delivered to all that were to be baptized. Suppose men now should stretch this Rule beyond the limits assigned it by *Vincentius*, what security can there be from him that it shall be a certain rule, who confined it within such narrow bounds? Not that I think, his Rules of no use at all now; no, I think them to be of admirable use and great importance to Christianity, if truly understood and applied. *i. e.* When any Persons take upon them to impose any thing upon others as a necessary

Commonit.
1. c. 39.

Commonit.
2. c. Antea
penult.

matter of faith to be believed by them; we can have no better rules of Judgement in this case than those of *Vincentius* are, viz. *Antiquity, Universality* and *Consent*; and whatsoever cannot be proved by these Rules ought to be rejected by all Christians. To make this plain, the Antient *Creeds* we allow on both sides to have been universally received by the Catholick Church; but now the *Church of Rome* adds new Articles to be believed, we desire to put the whole matter upon this issue: Let the Popes Supremacy, the *Roman Churches* Infallibility, the Doctrines of Transubstantiation, Purgatory, &c. be proved by as Universal Consent of Antiquity as the Articles of the Creed are, and then let them charge us with *Herese* if we reject them. But we say the measure of *Herese* in the Antient Church was the rejecting the *Rule of Faith* universally received among Christians, this *Rule of Faith*, we stand to, and say no other can be made upon any pretence whatsoever, as *Vincentius* at large proves; but what ever things are obtruded on the belief of Christians, which want that *Universal consent of Antiquity*, which the *Rule of Faith* had, we are bound by *Vincentius*, from plain Scripture, to shun them as *prophane novelties and corruptions of the Christian Faith*. These Rules therefore are

Vincent.
Commonit.
 1. ar. 26.
 ad 35.

not barely allowed, but pleaded for by us, in the test of Articles of Faith, as to which *Vincentius* tells us, if not the *only*, yet the *chief* use of them is.

2. But suppose the Question be not, concerning the express Articles of this Rule of Faith, but concerning the sense and meaning of them, how then are we to find out the consent of *Antiquity*? For they might all agree in the words, and yet have a different notion of the things. As *Petavius* at large proves, that there was an antient Tradition for the substance of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and yet he confesses that most of the Writers of the antient Church did differ in their explication of it from that, which was only allowed by the Council of *Nice*: And he grants, that *Arius* did follow the opinion of many of the Antients in the main of his Doctrine, who were guilty of the same error that he was before the matter was thoroughly discussed. Here now arises the greatest difficulty to me in this point of *Tradition*; the usefulness of it, I am told, is for explaining the *sense* of *Scripture*: but there begins a great Controversie in the *Church* about the explication of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, I desire to know whether *Vincentius* his Rules will help us here? It is pleaded by *S. Hierome* and others, "That the Writers of the Church

Petav. dogm. Theol. Tom. 2. in præfat.

L. 1. c. 8. sect. 2.

Hier. Adv. 2. c. Ruffin.

“might err in this matter, or speak un-
 “warily in it before the matter came to be
 “thoroughly discussed; if so, how comes the
 Testimony of *erroneous* or *unwary Writers* to
 be the *certain means* of giving the *sense* of
Scripture? And in most of the Contro-
 versies of the Church, this way hath been
 used to take off the Testimony of persons,
 who writ before the Controversie began, and
 spake differently of the matter in debate. I
 do not deny the truth of the allegation in
 behalf of those persons; but to my under-
 standing, it plainly shews the incompetency of
Tradition for giving a certain sense of Scrip-
 ture, when that Tradition is to be taken
 from the Writers of the foregoing Ages: and
 if this had been the only way of confuting
Arius, it is a great Question how he could
 ever have been condemned, if *Petavins* or
S. Hierome say true? But since a General
 Council hath determined the contrary to
 the opinion of these Writers before, which
 Council hath been received by the Universal
 Church, I will not deny that they had better
 opportunities of knowing what the sense of
 the Antient Church was, when so many
 Writings were extant which are now lost,
 than we can have at this distance; and there-
 fore we yield all submission to a Council of
 that nature and proceeding in that manner
 which

which that of *Nice* did ; who did not meerly determine that Controversie by the number of Writers on their side before them, but by comparing the opinions afterwards with the *Rule of Scriptures* ; and in this regard we acknowledge a great Reverence due to the decrees of such General Councils as that was. Therefore next to the Rule of Faith we allow a great veneration to the determinations of lawful General Councils Universally received ; which *Vincentius* himself pleads for : But supposing no general Councils or such which are not allowed , or received for such ; we are yet to enquire into the wayes of finding out Catholick Tradition , which may interpret Scripture. For this end he proposes another means which is , *The gathering together the c. 39. opinions of those Fathers alone ; who living holily , wisely and constantly in the faith and communion of the Catholick Church have dyed in that faith , or else for it.* But still with this reserve , *That what either all or many of them manifestly, frequently and constantly , as it were by a Council of them , have confirmed by their receiving , holding , and delivering of it , that ought to be held for undoubted , certain and firm ; but whatsoever any one though holy and learned , though a Bishop , Confessor or Martyr , hath held against the opinion of others that ought not to be looked*

looked on as the judgment of the Church, but as his own private opinion, and therefore not to be followed. Which words I shall not examine with all the severity that some have done, for then the proving these conditions to have been observed by any one person would require more pains, and be less capable of resolution than the matter it self is; but I say, that in most of the Controversies this day in the Christian world, it may be much more satisfactory to examine the merits of the cause than the integrity of the witnesses, these conditions being supposed. And yet after all this, we must not misunderstand him, as though this way would serve to confute all Heresies; For he tells us yet farther.

2. " This course can only hold in some
 C. 37. " new and upstart heresies, *i. e.* in case of the
 " pretence of some new revelation when men
 " pretend to some special grace without hu-
 " mane industry to discover some Divine
 " truth, not known before; but in case of an-
 C. 39. " cient and inveterate Heresies, he saith we
 " have no way to deal with them, but either
 " only by Scripture, or else by plain decrees
 " of General Councils, for when Heresies
 " have been of long continuance, then, saith
 " he, we may have ground to suspect they
 " have not dealt fairly with the Testimonies
 " of

“of ancient times, And thus we see what *Vincentius* hath offered towards the resolution of this great Question, *how we may be sure of the certain sense of Scripture in controverted places*; wherein is nothing contained but what we are willing to stand to; and very far from the least supposition of any infallibility in the present Guides of the Church for that end.

Thus far I have taken the pains to search into the opinion of the Primitive Church in this important Controversie; which I might carry yet farther, if it were at all needful. The substance of what is delivered by them is this, that if any Controversie arise in the Church concerning the sense of Scripture, if the Persons do not allow the Scripture, then we are to proceed by the best means we can have without it, *viz.* The tradition of Apostolical Churches from the beginning; if they do allow the Scripture then we are to examine and compare places of Scripture with all the care and judgment that may be. If after all this, the dispute still continues, then if it be against the ancient Rule of Faith universally received, that is a sufficient prescription against any opinion; if not against the Rule of Faith in express words, but about the sense of it, then if ancient General Councils have determined it which had greater oppor-

opportunities of knowing the sense of the Apostolical Church than we, it is reasonable we should yield to them; but if there have been none such, then the unanimous consent of Fathers is to be taken,* so it be in some late and upstart heresies, which men pretend to have by Revelation or some special Grace of God. Now either all these means were sufficient or not to find out the sense of Scripture, if not, then the antient Church was wholly defective and wanted any certain way of finding out the sense of Scripture; if there were sufficient, then there is no necessity of infallibility in the Guides of the Church to give us a certain sense of Scripture: which was the thing to be proved.

§. 14.

S. Augustinus
Testimony
examined.
p. 85.

But *N. O.* towards the conclusion of his Book produces *S. Augustin* for the Churches Infallibility, in delivering the sense of Scripture in obscure places; which being contrary to what I have already said concerning him, must be examined before I conclude this discourse about the sense of Scripture.

Aug. c. Cre-
icon. l. 1.
c. 33.

The place is out of his Answer to Cre-
iconius concerning the obscure point of Re-
baptization; in these words, since the holy
Scripture cannot deceive, let whosoever is in
fear of being deceived by the obscurity of this
Question, consult the same Church about it,
which

which Church the holy Scripture doth without all ambiguity demonstrate. And before, the truth of the Holy Scriptures is held by us in this matter, when we do that which hath pleased the Universal Church, which the Authority of the Scripture does commend, &c. All which is false and said to no purpose, saith N. O. if the Scripture be not clear in this, that this Church can determine nothing in such important contests contrary to the verity of the Scriptures, and that we ought to give credit to what she decides; for then it would not be true, what he says the truth of the same Scripture in this matter is held by us: and he who is in fear of being deceived by the obscurity of this Question, is no way relieved in following the sentence of the Church. To which I answer,

.That S. Augustin doth not suppose, that men cannot attain to any certainty of the sense of Scripture in this matter without the Churches Infallibility; for, he saith, in the Chapter preceding, that in this matter we follow the most certain Authority of Canonical Scriptures; but he puts the case, That no certain example could be produced out of Scripture, then he saith, they had the truth of the Scriptures when they do that which pleased the Universal Church, &c. For the explaining S. Augustins meaning, we

we are to consider, that there were two Controversies then on foot in the Church with the *Donatists*, the one concerning *Rebaptization*, the other concerning the *Church*; the former he looks upon as more intricate and obscure, by reason not only of the doubtfulness of Scripture, but the Authority of about seventy Bishops of *Africa*, who had determined for it, among whom *St. Cyprian* was chief, which we see in all his disputes with the *Donatists* on this subject he is very much perplexed with; therefore *St. Augustin* finding that Controversie very troublesome, was willing to bring it to that issue, that what the Catholick Church after so much discussing the point had agreed upon should be received as the truth. By this means the dispute would be brought to that other Question, which he thought much more easie, *viz.* Which was the true Church, the Catholick or the *Donatists*: but by no means doth *St. Augustin* hereby intend to make the Churches Authority to resolve all doubts concerning *Scriptures*; but he thought it much easier to prove by Scripture which was the true Church, than whether rebaptization were lawful or not. And accordingly his very next words are, *but if you doubt whether the Universal Church be that which the Scripture commends, I will lead*

you with many and most manifest Testimonies of Scripture to that end. Which is the design of his Book of the *Unity of the Church*: wherein he shews, "That those Testimonies of Scripture which speak of the Universality of the Church, are very plain and clear: and needed no interpretation at all, that in this case we are not to regard what Donatus, or Parmenianus, or Pontius hath said; for neither, saith he, are we to yield to Catholick Bishops themselves, if they be at any time so much deceived as to hold what is contrary to Canonical Scriptures. By which it is evident that he supposed no infallibility in the *Guides* of the Church. And in terms he asserts, "that the Church is to be proved by nothing but plain Scriptures, neither by the Authority of Optatus, or St. Ambrose, or innumerable Bishops, nor Councils, nor Miracles, nor visions and Revelations, (whatever N. O. thinks of them) now St. *Augustin* supposing there was much less ambiguity in Scripture in the Controversie of the Church than in that of Rebaptization, he endeavours to bring them to a resolution in the other point for the clearing of this: and so he only pursues the method laid down in the *Books of Christian Doctrine*, to make use of plainer places of Scripture to give light to the darker.

And

Aug. de u-
nit. Eccles.
C. 4. 5. 19.

C. 10;

C. 16;

And when they were convinced by Scripture that the Catholick Church was the true Church of Christ, he doth not question but they would follow that which was the sentence of the Catholick Church. But here lyes the main difficulty, *for what account the sentence of the Church was to be followed?* In order to the resolution of it, we must take notice of these things.

1. That all the proofs which *S. Augustin* brings for the Church do relate only to the *extent* and *Universality* of it, and not to any *Infallibility* that is promised to it; as will easily appear to any one that will read his discourses on that subject against the *Donatists*.

*Aug. de Bapti-
ti. c. Do-
nat. l. 2. c. 1.
c. 9. l. 4. c. 6.
l. 2. c. 4.
l. 3. c. 10.
l. 6. c. 2.*

2. That he asserts no infallibility in the highest Authority of the Church; which in many places of his *Books of Baptism* against the *Donatists* he makes to be a *Plenary* or *General Council*; whose Authority, he saith, *was to be preferred before that of S. Cyprian, or any particular Councils either in his time, or before it*; which he calls the Authority and decrees of the *Universal Church*. So that we see, he resolves all the Authority of the Church in this matter into that of a *General Council*: (whether that of *Arles*, or *Nice* is not to my purpose to enquire) and we shall then see what his opinion is of the Churches infallibility by that which he de-
livers

livers of General Councils ; as well as any other Church Authority compared with the Scriptures , in these remarkable words.

who knows not that the sacred Canonical Scripture is contained within its certain

De Bapt. c.
Donat. l. 2.
c. 31.

bounds , and is so far to be preferred before all later writings of Bishops that there can be no doubt or dispute at all made, whether that be true or right which is contained therein ; but all later writings of Bishops which have been or are written , since the Canon of Scripture hath been confirmed , may be corrected, if in any thing they err from the Truth , either by the wiser discourse of any more skilful person , or the weightier Authority of other Bishops, or the prudence of more learned men , or by Councils : And even Councils themselves that are Provincial yield without dispute to those which are General , and called out of all the Christian world ; and of these General Councils the former are often amended by the latter , when by some farther tryal of things that which was shut is laid open , and that which was hidden is made known without any swelling of sacrilegious pride , or stiffness of arrogancy , or contention of envy ; but with holy humility , Catholick peace and Christian Charity. Can any one that reads this excellent Testimony of S. Augustin delivered in this same mat-

R

ter,

ter, ever imagine he could so plainly contradict himself; as to assert the Churches infallibility in one place, and destroy it in another? Would he assert *That all Councils how General soever may be amended by following Councils*, and yet bind men to believe, that the decrees of the former Councils do contain the unalterable will of God? A lesser person than S. *Augustin* would never thus directly contradict himself, and that about the very same Controversie, which words of his cannot be understood of *unlawful Councils*, of *matters of fact or practice*, but do refer to the great Question then in debate about rebaptizing Hereticks; and hereby he takes off the great Plea, the Donatists made from the Authority of St. *Cyprian* and his Council, which they continually urged for themselves.

3. He grants, that *the arguments drawn from the Churches Authority are but humane*, and that satisfaction is to be taken from the Scriptures in this Controversie. "For mentioning the obscurity of this Question, and the great debates that had been about it before the *Donatists* time among great and good men, and diverse resolutions of Councils and the settlement of it at last by a p'enary Council of the whole World; but lest, saith he, I should seem to make

Expt.
l. 6. 4

"use

"use only of humane arguments, I produce
 "certain Testimonies out of the Gospel, by
 "which, God willing, I demonstrate how true
 "and agreeable to his Will the Doctrine and
 "practice of the Catholick Church is. And
 "elsewhere he appeals not to the Judgment
 "of men, but to the Lords ballance, *viz.*
 To his Judgment delivered in Scripture, and
 in this same case when he was urged by the
 Authority of *Cyprian*, he saith, "There are
 "no Writings they have not liberty to judge
 "of, but those of Scripture, and by them
 "they are to judge of all others, and what
 "is agreeable to them they receive, what is
 "not they reject, though written by per-
 "sons of never so great Authority. And af-
 ter all this is it possible to believe that *St. Au-*
gustin should make the Churches decree in a
 General Council infallible? No: the ut-
 most by a careful consideration of his mind
 in this matter that I can find, is; that in a
 Question of so doubtful and obscure a nature
 as that was, which had been so long bandied
 in the Churches of *Africa*, and from thence
 spread over all the Churches of the Christian
 World, it was a reasonable thing to presume
 that what the whole Christian World did
 consent in was the truth, not upon the ac-
 count of infallibility, but the reasonable sup-
 position that all the Churches of the Chri-

De Baptif.
l. 2. c. 14.

c. Crescon.
l. 2. c. 31.
32.

stian World, would not consent in a thing repugnant to any Apostolical Doctrine or Tradition. And so *S. Augustins* meaning is the same with *Vincentius Lerinensis* as to the Universal attestation of the Christian Church in a matter of Tradition; being declared by the decree of a General Council, and that decree Universally received, but only by the litigant parties in *Africa*. To which purpose it is observable, that he so often appeals to the *Universal consent of Christians* in this matter; after it had been so thoroughly discussed and considered, by the most wise and disinterested persons, and that consent declared by a Plenary Council before himself was born. So that if Authority were to be relied upon in this obscure Controversie, he saith, the Authority of the Universal Church was to be preferred, before that of several Councils in *Africa*, of the Bishops and particularly *S. Cyprian* who met in them. And whereas *S. Cyprian* had slighted Tradition in this matter, *Christ* having called himself Truth and not custom, *S. Augustin* replies to him; "That the custome of the Church
 "having been alwayes so, and continuing after
 "such opposition, and confirmed by a General
 "Council, and after examination of the rea-
 "sons and Testimonies of Scripture on both
 "sides, it may be now said, that we follow
 "what

C. Crescon.

ib. de Bapt.

C. Donat.

L. 1. c. 18.

L. 2. c. 9.

L. 3. c. 10.

L. 4. c. 6, 7.

L. 5. c. 4.

L. 6. c. 2.

L. 4. c. 7.

“ what Truth hath declared. Wherein we see with what modesty and upon what grounds he declares his mind, which at last comes to no more than *Vincentius* his *Rules of Antiquity, Universality and Consent*. Especially in such a matter as this was, which had nothing but Tradition to be pleaded for it, the *Apostles* having determined nothing of either side, in their Books, as *St. Augustin* himself at last confesses in this matter. The most then that can be made of the Testimony alledged out of *S. Augustin* is this, that in a matter of so doubtful and obscure a nature wherein the *Apostles* have determined nothing in their Writings, we are to believe that to be the truth, which the Universal Church of Christ agreed in those times, when the consent of the Universal Church was so well known by frequent discussion of the case, and coming at last to a resolution in a General Council. In such a case as this, I agree to what *S. Augustin* saith, and think a man very much relieved by following so evident a consent of the Universal Church: not by vertue of any *infallibility*, but the unreasonableness of believing so many, so wise, so disinterested persons should be deceived. Let the same evidences be produced for the consent of the *Universal Church* from the *Apostolical times* in the matters in dispute be-

De Bapt. c.
Donat. l. 5.
c. 23.

tween our *Church* and that of *Rome*, and the Controversie of *Infallibility* may be laid aside; For such an Universal consent of the Christian Church I look upon as the most Authentick Interpreter of Holy Scripture in doubtful and obscure places. But let them never think to fob us off, with the consent of the *Roman Faction* for the *Universal Church*, nor of some *later ages*, for a *Tradition from Apostolical times*, nor of a *packed Company of Bishops* for a *truly General Council*. And thus much may now serve to clear that important Controversie about the sense of Scripture in doubtful places.

§. 15. *Of Church Authority.* The last thing to be considered is, whether the same arguments which overthrow infallibility, do likewise destroy all Church-Authority? For this is by *N. O.* frequently objected against me; for, he saith, *thus it happens more than once in these Principles laid down by me, that in too forward a zeal in demolishing the one, viz. Church Infallibility, the other is also dangerously undermined, viz. Church-Authority.* And therefore out of his singular regard to the good of our Church, he saith, *it concerns my Superiors to look to it, whether their Churches and their own Authority suffers no detriment from my Principles*, and, again, he saith, *my Principles against Infallibility conclude, the* use-

usefulness of any Ecclesiastical Authority to teach men, as of an Infallible to assure men of the truth of those things, which by using only their own sincere endeavour they may know without them. And lastly, he saith, my Principles afford no effectual way or means of suppressing or convicting any Schism, Sect or Heresie, or reducing them either to submission of judgment or silence. And therefore he desires the prudent to consider; whether the Authority of the Church of England is not much debilitated and brought into contempt, and daily like to wane more and more by this new taken up way of its Defense. My answer is, that I have carefully examined and searched my Principles and find no such Gunpowder in them for blowing up Authority either of Church or State. For all that I can discover, they are very innocent and harmless; and if all other mens had been so, we had never heard so much talk of this way, of undermining and blowing up. But is it not a pleasant thing to see, all of a sudden, what zeal these men discover for the preservation of our Churches Authority? Alas good men! It grieves them at the very heart, to see the Authority of our Church weakned and that by its own members. What would not they do for the strengthening and upholding of it? What pity it is, such a Church

P. 84.

P. 98.

P. 99

should not stand, whose very enemies take such care for its preservation: And are so ready to discover the plots of its own children against it: But to be sure there is mischief intended when enemies discover it; not by those whom they accuse, but by the honest Informers; who would be content to hold their peace, if they thought they could not sow mischief by pretending to discover it. It is a pretty plot to make those who design to defend our Church to be the underminers of it, and the most professed Enemies its surest Friends. But such plots are too fine to hold, and too thin not to be seen through. How is it I beseech *N. O.* that my principles undermine all Church Authority? Have I any where made the Church a meer shadow, and an insignificant Cypher, a Society depending only on the pleasure of men for its subsistence and Authority? This had been indeed to the purpose, but not the least word tending that way can be drawn out of any Principles of mine. For I verily believe, that the Church is a Society instituted by Christ himself, and invested with Authority necessary for its Government and preservation. *But though I cannot deny such an Authority, I may render it wholly useless.* I cannot conceive any such malignant influence in any Principle of mine, but if there be, it must be from one of these things.

things. 1. Either because I deny Infallibility in the Guides of the Church. Or 2. Because I say that the Scriptures are plain in things necessary to salvation. Or 3. Because I deny the Authority of the Church of *Rome*. Or 4. Because I am not for such an effectual way of suppressing Sects and Heresies as is in use in the *Roman* Church. But I hope to make it appear, that none of these do in the least tend to weaken, or bring into contempt the Church of *Englands* Authority, nor the just Authority of any Church in the World.

1. *Not the denial of Infallibility.* This *N. O.* seems to suppose to be the very *Faux* in the *Gunpowder Plot*, the instrument of setting all on Fire. But is there any thing peculiar to my Principles herein? Have not all who have written against the Church of *Rome* opposed the pretence of Infallibility? how then come my principles to be of so mischievous a nature above others? But I pray, Sir, are Authority and Infallibility all one in your account? We suppose that Magistrates and Parents, and Masters have all of them an unquestionable Authority, but I never heard yet of any man that said they were infallible: or that there was no ground to obey them, if they were not. Why may we not then allow any Authority belonging to the Governours of the Church, and yet think it possible for them

to be deceived? Is this a sufficient reason for any man to cast off his subjection to his Prince, because it's possible he may require something unlawful? or to disobey his Parents, because they do not sit in an infallible chair? or to slight his Master, because he is not Pope? These are strange ways of arguing about matters of Religion, which are ridiculous in any other case. If the possibility of being deceived destroys no other Authority in the world, why should it do that of the Church? The Magistrate does not lose his Authority though we say we are to obey God rather than men, and consequently to examine whether the Laws of men are not repugnant to the Laws of God, which implies that he may require what it is our duty not to do. The Authority of Parents is not destroyed, because in some cases we are bound to disobey them, when they command men to destroy or rise up in arms against their Sovereign. How comes it then to pass, that all Church-Authority is immediately gone, if we do but suppose a possibility of error in those which have it? But it may be said *it is their office to be Guides, and if we do not follow them absolutely, we renounce them from being our Guides.* To which I answer, there are two sorts of persons that stand in need of Guides, the blind and the Ignorant; the blind must follow their Guides because

cause of an incapacity of seeing their way, the Ignorant for want of Instruction. Yet neither of these are bound to believe their Guides Infallible, and to follow them at all adventures. For even the blind by their own sad experience of frequent falling into ditches or knocking their heads against Posts may have reason to question, if not the skill, yet the sincerity of their Guides, and though they must have some, may seek new ones. The Ignorant follow their Guides only upon the opinion of their skill and integrity; and when they see reason to Question these, they know of no obligation to follow their conduct over rocks and precipices; if they are so careless of their own welfare, others are not bound to follow them therein. But we are not to presume persons so wholly Ignorant, but they have some general Rules by which to judge of the skill and fidelity of their Guides. If a Person commits himself to the care of a Pilot to carry him to *Constantinople* because of his ignorance of the Sea, should this man still rely upon his Authority, if he carried him to find out the North West passage? No: though he may not know the particular Coasts so well; yet he knows the East and West, the North and South from each other. If a stranger should take a Guide to conduct him from *London* to *York*, although he may not think

think fit to dispute with him at every doubtful turning, yet is he bound to follow him when he travels all day with the Sun in his face: for although he doth not know the direct road yet he knows that he is to go Northward. The meaning of all this is, that the supposition of Guides in Religion doth depend upon some common principles of Religion that are or may be known to all, and some precepts so plain, that every Christian without any help may know them to be his duty; within the compass of these plain and known duties lyes the capacity of persons judging of their Guides; if they carry them out of this beaten way, they have no reason to rely upon them in other things: if they keep themselves carefully within those bounds, and shew great integrity therein, then in doubtful and obscure things they may with more safety rely upon them. But if they tell them they must put out their eyes to follow them the better or if they kindly allow them to keep their eyes in their heads, yet they must believe them against their eye-sight, if they perswade them to break plain Commands of God, and to alter the Institutions of Christ, what reason can there be that any should commit themselves to the absolute Conduct of such unfaithful Guides? And this is not to destroy all Authority of faithful Guides, for they may be

of great use for the direction of unskilful persons in matters that are doubtful and require skill to resolve them, but it is only to suppose that their Authority is not absolute, nor their direction infallible. *But if we take away this Infallible direction from the Guides of the Church, what Authority is there left them?* As much as ever God gave them, and if they will not be contented with that, we cannot help it; and that it may appear how vain and frivolous these exceptions are, I shall now shew what real Authority is still left in the Governours of the Church, though Infallibility be taken away. And that I shew in three things.

1. An Authority of inflicting censures upon offenders; which is commonly called the Power of the keys, or of receiving into, and excluding out of the Communion of the Church. This the Church was invested with by Christ himself, and is the necessary consequence of the being and institution of a Christian Society, which cannot be preserved in its purity and peace without it. Which Authority belongs to the Governours of the Church, and however the Church in some respects be incorporated with the Commonwealth in a Christian State, yet its Fundamental Rights remain distinct from it: of which this is one of the chief to receive into and exclude

exclude out of the Church such persons which, according to the Laws of a Christian Society, are fit to be taken in or shut out.

2. An Authority of making Rules and Canons about matters of order and decency in the Church. Not meerly in the necessary circumstances of time and place, and such things, the contrary to which imply a natural indecency; but in continuing and establishing those ancient rites of the Christian Church, which were practised in the early times of Christianity, and are in themselves of an indifferent nature. Which Authority of the Church hath been not only asserted in the Articles of our Church, but strenuously defended against the trifling objections of her Enemies, from Scripture, Antiquity and Reason. And I freely grant, not only that such an Authority is in it self reasonable and just; but that in such matters required by a Lawful Authority (such as that of our Church is) there is an advantage on the side of Authority, against a scrupulous Conscience, which ought to overrule the practice of such who are the members of that Church.

3. An Authority of proposing matters of *faith* and directing men in Religion. Which is the proper Authority of Teachers, and Guides, and Instructors of others; which may be done several ways, as by particular

instruction of doubtful persons, who are
 bound to make use of the best helps they can,
 among which that of their Guides is the most
 ready and useful, and who are obliged to
 take care of their Souls, and therefore to give
 the most faithful advice and Counsel to them.
 Besides this, there is a publick way of in-
 structing by discourses grounded upon Scri-
 pture to particular congregations, assembled
 together for the worship of God in places
 set apart for that end and therefore called
 Churches. And those who are duly appoint-
 ed for this work, and ordained by those whose
 office is to ordain, *viz.* the Bishops, have an
 Authority to declare what the mind and Will
 of God is, contained in Scripture in order
 to the Salvation and edification of the Souls
 of men. But besides this, we may consider
 the Bishops and representative Clergy of a
 Church as met together for reforming any
 abuses crept into the practice of Religion or
 errors in Doctrine; and in this case we
 assert that such a Synod or Convocation
 hath the power and Authority within it self
 (especially having all the ancient rights of a
 Patriarchal Church) when a more general con-
 sent cannot be obtained to publish and declare
 that those errors and abuses are, and to do
 as much as in them lyes to reform them, *viz.*
 by requiring a consent to such propositions as
 are

are agreed upon for that end; of those who are to enjoy the publick offices of teaching and instructing others. Not to the end that all those propositions should be believed as Articles of Faith; but because no Reformation can be effected, if persons may be allowed to preach and officiate in the Church in a way contrary to the design of such a Reformation.

And this is now that Authority we attribute to the Governours of our Church, although we allow no Infallibility to them. And herein we proceed in a due mean between the extreams of robbing the Church of all Authority of one side; and advancing it to Infallibility on the other. But we cannot help the weakness of those mens understandings, who cannot apprehend that any such thing as Authority should be left in a Church if we deny Infallibility. Other diseases may be cured, but natural incapacity cannot.

2. Not, the making Scriptures plain to all sober enquirers in matters necessary to Salvation. This is that principle which N. O. makes such horrible out-crys about, as though it were the Foundation of all the Heresies and Sects in the World. Thus, he saith, make all Ecclesiastical Authority useless; for what need is there of Bishops, Presbyters, or any

Ecclesiastical Pastors among Protestants, as to the office of teaching or expounding these writings, if these in all necessities are clear to all persons, who desire to know the meaning of them : But not content with this modest charge in comparison, in another Treatise, this is made the very height of Fanaticism, in spite of Mother Juliana and their Legendary Saints : because, forsooth, this is to ground all our Religion upon our own fancies, enquiring into the true sense of divine Revelation; and therefore, good man, seems troubled at it, that he can by no means in the world absolve me from being not only a Fanatick, but a Teacher of Fanaticism. In earnest, it was happily found out, to return this heavy charge back upon my self with so much rage and violence; (for although N. O. be a modest man, yet S. C. is a meer fury) for not meerly Fanaticism, pure putid Fanaticism follows from this principle, Fanaticism without vizard or disguise, and all this demonstratively proved from this Principle, But all our Church is immediately gone with it; Men may talk of dangerous plots for undermining and blowing up of Towns and Forts and Parliaments, but what are all those to the blowing up a whole Church at once? For since that Train of my Principles hath been laid, nothing like the old Church

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Fanaticism
Fanatically
imputed to
the Roman
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of *England* hath been seen. It is true, there are the same Bishops, the same Authority, the same Liturgy and Ceremonies, the same Preachers and Officers that were; but what are all these to the *Church of England*? For from hence it follows (if we believe *S. C.*) that the Governours of our Church have no Authority to teach truth, or to condemn errors; and all the people are become Prophets, and all their Articles, Constitutions and Ordinances have been composed and enjoined by an usurped Authority. Very sad consequences truly! but like deep plots they lye very far out of sight. For to my understanding, not one of these dismal things follows any more from my Principles, than from proving that *S. C.* and *N. O.* both stand for the same Person. Which will easily appear to any one else that will but consider. 1. The intention of those Principles. 2. The just consequence of them.

1. The intention of those Principles; which was plainly to lay down the Foundations of a Christians faith living in the Communion of our Church; (which is expressed in as perspicuous terms before them as may be;) and to shew that the *Roman Church's* Infallibility is no necessary Foundation of Faith. Now, this being the design of those Principles, to what purpose should I have

gone

gone about therein, to have stated the nature and bounds of the Authority of particular Churches? I no where in the least exclude the use of all means and due helps of Guides and others for the understanding the sense of Scripture; and I no where mention them; because my business was only about the Foundation of Faith, and whether Infallibility was necessary for that or no? If I have proved it was not, I have gained my design; for then those who deny the Church of *Rome's* Infallibility may never the less have a sure Foundation, or solid Principles to build their Faith upon. Now to what purpose in an account of the Principles of Faith should I mention those things, which we do not build our faith upon, I mean the Authority of our Guides? for although we allow them all the usefulness of helps; yet those are no more to be mentioned in the Principles of resolving Faith, than *Euclid's* Master was to be mentioned in his Demonstrations. For although he might learn his skill from him; yet the force of his Demonstrations did not depend upon his Authority. I hope it now appears, how far I am from making *Church Authority* useless; but I still say our Faith is not to be resolved into it, and therefore is not to be reckoned as a Principle or Foundation of Faith. To that end it is sufficient to prove,

that men in the due use of means, whom I call *sober enquirers*, may without any Infallible Church, believe the Scriptures, and understand what is necessary to their Salvation herein: If this may be, then I think it follows (*Princ. 15.*) that there can be no necessity supposed of any infallible Society of men, either to attest or explain these Writings, among Christians. Not one word that takes away the use of Authority in the Church, but only of Infallibility; *but it may be said that although it might not be my intention, yet it may be the just consequence of the Principles themselves.*

2. Therefore I shall now prove that no consequence drawn from them can infer this. For what if all those things which are necessary to Salvation are plain in Scripture, to all that sincerely endeavour to understand them, doth it hence follow that there can be no just Authority in a Church, no use of Persons to instruct others, must all the people become Prophets and no bounds be set to the liberty of Propheying? These are bad consequences, but the comfort is, they are not true. If I should say that the necessary Rules for a mans health are so plainly laid down by *Hippocrates*, that every one that will take the pains may understand them; doth this make the whole profession of Physick useless, or license every

every man to practise Physick that will, or make it needless to have any Professours in that faculty. When the Philosophers of old did so frequently inculcate that the necessaries for life were few and easie; did this make all Political Government useles, and give every man power to do what he pleased? Men of any common understanding would distinguish between the necessaries of life and civil Society; so would any one but *S. C.* or *N. O.* of the necessaries to Salvation, and to the Government of the Church; For men must be considered first as Christians, and then as Christians united together: as in civil Societies they are to be considered first as men, and then as *Cives*; to say, that a man hath all that is necessary to preserve his life as a man, doth not overthrow the Constitution of a Society, although it implies that he might live without it: so when men are considered barely as Christians no more ought to be thought necessary for them as such, but what makes them capable of Salvation; but if we consider them as joyning together in a Christian Society, then many other things are necessary for that end: For then there must be Authority in some and subjection in others, there must be orders and Constitutions, whereby all must be kept within their due bounds, and there must be persons appointed to in-

struct the Ignorant, to satisfy the doubting,
 to direct the unskilful, and to help the weak.
 It belongs to such a Society not barely to
 provide for necessity but safety, and not
 merely the safety of particular persons but of
 it self; which cannot be done without pru-
 dent orders, fixing the bounds of mens im-
 ployments, and not suffering every pretender
 to visions and Revelations to set up for a new
 Sect, or which is all one a new Order of Re-
 ligious men. How comes it now to pass that
 by saying that men, considered barely as Chri-
 stians, may understand all that is necessary to
 their Salvation, *I do overthrow all Autho-
 rity of a Church and make all men Prophets?*
 Do I in the least mention mens teaching
 others, or being able themselves to put a
 difference, between what is so necessary
 and what not; or doth *S. C.* suppose that all
 that understand what is necessary to Salvation
 have no need to be ruled and governed? If he
 thinks so, I assure him I am quite of another
 opinion, and do make no question but that
 Government ought to be preserved in a
 Church, though the necessities to Salvation
 be known to all in it; and so I suppose doth
 any one else that in the least considers what he
 says. By this we see, that *S. C.*'s recrimi-
 nation of *Fanaticism* on our Church, by
 vertue of this principle is as feeble as the De-

fence

fence he hath made for his own, of which he may hear in due time. But if there be any *Fanaticism* in this principle, we have the concurrence of the greatest and wisest persons of the Christian Church in it: Two of them especially have in terms said as much as I have done, St. *Augustin* in his Books of Christian Doctrine already mentioned: and St. *Chrysostome* in as plain words as may be.

Πάντα ὡς ἐστὶν αἱ παρὰ ταῖς θεαῖς γραφαί. Πάντα ταῖς
ἐπιγραφαῖς ὁῦλα. *All things are plain and right* Coryc. 17
2. ad T. off.
Hon. 3.

ἡγιαῖα δὲλα. *All things are plain and right in the holy Scriptures; all necessary things are manifest.* Let S. C. now charge all the dreadful consequences of this principle on St. *Chrysostome*, and tell him that he destroyed all Church-Authority, and laid the Foundation for the height of *Fanaticism*? Nay St. *Chrysostome* goes much higher than I do, for he saith

οὐκ ἔστιν ὁμοίωσις; ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας παθολογίας αὖτις ἡ
χορεία γίνεται. Διὰ τί δὲ ὁμοιότης χορεία; πάντα Σεφ., &c.

If I had made the Guides of the Church so useless as St. *Chryſoſtome* ſeems to do in theſe words, what paſſionate and hideous out-cry would S. C. have made? And by this let the ſkill or ingenuity of S. C. be tryed, who ſays, *that I cannot find out one ſingle ſhort ſentence in Antiquity to ſupport the main pillar of my Religion*, which he ſuppoſes this principle to be; and for the finding out the ſenſe of Scripture without the help of Infallibility,

I have produced more out of Antiquity in this discourse, than either he or his whole partie will be able to Answer.

3. *Not the denying the Authority of the Church of Rome.* Which I must do till I see some better proofs for it, than I have ever yet done. But how doth this, *destroy all Authority in a Church?* can there be none, but what is derived from *Rome*? I do not think, I do in the least diminish the Kings Authority, by denying that he derives it from the *Cham* of *Tartary*, or the *Great Mogol*: although they may challenge the Lordship of the whole Earth to themselves: and may pretend very plausible reasons that it would be much more for the quiet and conveniency of mankind to be all under one Universal Monarch, and that none have so fair a pretence to it, as they that have challenged the Right of it to themselves: and yet for all this, I do verily believe the King hath an unquestionable right to his Kingdom, and a just Authority over all his subjects. The time was when the first of *Genesis* would serve to prove the Popes title, and *the Suns ruling by day* was thought a clear argument for his supremacy; but the world is now altered and all the wit and subtilty that hath been since used hath not been able to make
good

good that crackt title of Universal Pastorship,
 which the Bishops of *Rome* have taken to
 themselves. But although we disown the
 Popes Authority as an unjust usurpation,
 we assert and plead for the Authority of the
 Church and the Bishops who are placed there-
 in, who derive their power to Govern the
 Church from Christ and not from the Pope.
 And I dare appeal to any Person, whether the
 asserting the Bishops deriving their Autho-
 rity from Christ or from the Pope, be the
 better way of defending their Power? We
 are not now disputing what Authority were
 fit to be entrusted in the Popes hands, sup-
 posing all other differences composed, and
 that things were in the same State wherein
 they were in the times of the 4. General
 Councils; in which case, it ought to be con-
 sidered, how far it might be convenient to
 give way to such an Authority so apt to grow
 extravagant, and which hath been stretched
 so very far beyond what the Canons allowed,
 that it hath challenged Infallibility to it self;
 but the thing at present under debate, is,
 whether the disallowing the *Papal Hierarchy*
 doth overthrow all Authority in the Epi-
 scopal; which is in effect to ask, whether
 there be any other power besides the Popes in
 the Church? for if there be any other, the
 denying the Popes Authority over us cannot
 in

in the least diminish the just Authority of Bishops.

Preface to
Principles
considered.

The only considerable Question in this case is, whether the rejecting that *Hierarchy* which was in being at the time of the Reformation, doth not make way for the peoples rejecting the Authority of our Bishops, and consequently no Authority in the Church can be maintained, unless we again yield to the *Papal* Authority. This I suppose to be *N. O's* meaning, when he tells us *by Church-Authority* he means that *Superior and more comprehensive Body of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy; which in any dissent and division of the Clergy, according to the Church Canons ought to be obeyed. And any particular Church divided from this more universal cannot with the least pretence of reason challenge submission from her subjects, since she her self (and particularly the Church of England) refused the same to all the Authority extant in the world, when she separated her self.* To this I answer,

That the Church of *England* in Reforming her self did not oppose any just Authority then extant in the World. It is to no purpose to make such loud clamours about our Churches refusing submission to all the Authority then extant in the World, unless there be better Evidence produced for it, than we have yet seen. For it is very well known that

that the dispute was then concerning the Popes Supremacy over our Church, which we have all along asserted to have been a notorious encroachment upon the liberties of our Church. And the Popes usurpations were so injurious both to the Ecclesiastical and Civil Government, that those who adhered to the Religion of the *Roman* Church yet agreed to the rejecting that Authority which he challenged in *England*. Which is sufficiently known to have been the beginning of the Breach, between the two Churches. Afterwards, when it was thus agreed that the Bishop of *Rome* had no such Authority as he challenged, what should hinder our Church from proceeding in the best way it could for the Reformation of it self? For the Popes Supremacy being cast out as an usurpation, our Church was thereby declared to be a *Free Church*, having the Power of Government within it self. And what method of proceeding could be more reasonable in this case, than by the advice of the Governours of the Church and by the concurrence of civil Authority to publish such Rules and Articles, according to which Religion was to be professed and the worship of God settled in *England*? And this is that which *N. O.* calls *refusing submission to all the Authority then extant in the world*; was all the Authority then extant

extant, shut up in the Popes Breast & was there no due power of Governing left, because his unjust power was cast off, and that first by Bishops, who in other things adhered to the *Roman Church*? *But they proceeded farther and altered many things in Religion against the Consent of the more Universal Church*: It is plain since our Church was declared to be *Free* they had a Liberty of enquiring and determining things fittest to be believed and practised; this then could not be her fault. *But in those things they decreed, they went contrary to the consent of the Universal Church*: Here we are now come to the merits of the cause; and we have from the beginning of the Reformation defended, that we rejected nothing but innovations, and Reformed nothing but Abuses. *But the Church thought otherwise of them*. What Church I pray? The Primitive and Apostolical? that we have always appealed to and offered to be tryed by. The truly Catholick Church of all Ages? That we utterly deny to have agreed in any one thing against the Church of *England*. But the plain *English* of all is, the Church of *Rome* was against the Church of *England*, and no wonder, for the Church of *England* was against the Church of *Rome*; but we know of no Fault we are guilty of therein; nor any obligation of submission to the

the Commands of that Church. And N. O. doth not say, that we opposed the whole Church, but *the more Universal Church, i. e.* I suppose the greater number of Persons at that time. But doth he undertake to make this good, that the greater number of Christians, then in the world, did oppose the Church of England? How doth he know that the *Eastern, Armenian, Abyssin and Greek Churches* did agree with the Church of Rome against us? No: that is not his meaning; but by *the more Universal Church*, he fairly understands no more but the Church of Rome. And that we did oppose the Doctrine and practices of the Church of Rome we deny not; but we utterly deny that to be the *Catholick Church*, or that we opposed any lawful Authority in denying submission to it. But according to the *Canons of the Church* we are to obey, in any dissent or division of the Clergy, the *Superiour and more comprehensive Body of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. What he means by this, I do not well understand, either it must be the Authority of the Pope and Councils of the *Roman Church*, or a General Council of all the *Catholick Church*. For the first, we owe no obedience to them, for the second, there was no such thing then in the world, and therefore could not be opposed. And for the *Canons of the Catholick*

Councils before the breaches of Christendom, no Church hath been more guilty of a violation of them, than the *Church of Rome*, since *the Rules of the Fathers* have been turned into *the Royalties of St. Peter*. We are no Enemies to the ancient Patriarchal Government of the Christian Church, and are far more for preserving the Dignity of it, than the *Roman Church* can be: For we should think it a happy State of the Christian Church, if all the Patriarchs did enjoy their ancient power and privileges, and all Christendom would consent to a truly Free and General Council; which we look on as the best expedient on earth, for composing the differences of the Christian World, if it might be had. But we cannot endure to be abused by meer names of titular Patriarchs, but real Servants and Pensionaries of the Popes, with combinations of interested parties instead of General Councils, with the pleasure of Popes instead of ancient Canons. Let them reduce the ancient Government of the Church within its due bounds; let the Bishop of *Rome* content himself with the privileges he then enjoyed; let debates be free and Bishops assemble with an equal proportion out of all Churches of Christendom; and if we then oppose so general a consent of the Christian Church, let them charge us *with not submitting*

mitting to all the Authority extant of the world. But since, the State of Christendom hath been so much divided, that a truly General Council is next to an impossible thing, the Church must be Reformed by its parts, and every *Free Church*, enjoying the Rights of a Patriarchal See, hath according to the Canons of the Church a sufficient power to Reform all abuses within it self, when a more general consent cannot be obtained. By this we may see how very feeble this charge is of destroying all Church-Authority by refusing submission to the Roman Hierarchy: and how very pitiful an advantage can from hence be made by the dissenting parties among us, who decry that Patriarchal and ancient Government as Anti-Christian which we allow as Prudent and Christian. But of the difference of these two cases, I have spoken already.

4. But yet *N. O.* saith, *my principles afford no effectual way or means in this Church of suppressing or convicting any Schism, Sect or Heresie, or reducing them either to submission of judgment or silence: Therefore my Principles are destructive to all Church-Authority.* To which I answer,

1. That the design of my Principles was to lay down the Foundations of Faith, and

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not the means of suppressing heresies. If I had laid down the Foundations of Peace and left all Persons to their own judgments without any regard to Authority, this might have been justly objected against me; but according to this way, it might have been objected to *Aristotle* that he was an Enemy to civil Government, because he doth not lay down the Rules of it in his *Logick*, or that *Hippocrates* favoured the *Chymists* and *Mountebanks*, because he saith not a word of the *Colledge of Physicians*. If I had said any thing about the Authority of particular Churches, or the ways of suppressing Sects, then how insultingly had I been asked; What is all this to the Foundations of Faith? Excellent Protestant principles of Faith! They begin now to resolve faith into the Authority of their own Church: or else to what end is this mentioned, where nothing is pretended to but laying down the Foundations on which Protestants do build their faith? But although there be no way of escaping impertinent objections, yet it is some satisfaction to ones self to have given no occasion for them.

2. I would know what he understands by his *effectual means of suppressing Sects or Heresies*. We are sure the meer Authority of their Church hath been no more *effectual means*

means; than that of ours hath been; but there is another means they use which is far more *effectual*, viz. the *Inquisition*. This in truth is all the *effectual means* they have above us; but God keep us from so Barbarous and Diabolical a means of suppressing Schisms; The *Sanbenits* have not more pictures of Devils upon them, than the *Inquisition* it self hath of their Spirit in it; however that Gracious Pope *Paul 4.* attributed the settling of it in Spain to the *Inspiration of the Holy Ghost*; not that Holy Ghost certainly, that came down from Heaven upon the Apostles; but that which was conveyed in a Portmantue from *Rome* to the Council of *Trent*. But if this be the *effectual means* he understands, I hope he doth not think it any credit to the Authority of their Church, that all who dispute it must endure a most miserable life or a most cruel death. All the other means they have are but probable; but this, this is the most *effectual*. How admirably do Fire and Faggots end Controversies! No general Council signifies half so much as a Court of *Inquisition*; and the Pope himself is not near so good a Judge of Controversies as the Executioner, and *Dic Ecclesie* is nothing to *Take him Gaoler*. These have been the kind, the tender, the primitive, the Christian means of suppressing Sects and Heresies in

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mauca Ex-
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the *Roman Church*! O how compassionate a Mother is that Church; that takes her froward Children in her hands to dash their brains against the stones! O how pleasant a thing it is for Brethren to be destroyed for lack of Unity! How beautiful upon the 7. Mountains are the Feet of those who shed the Blood of Hereticks! Never were there two men had a more Catholick Spirit, than *Dioclesian* and *Bishop Banner*. Men may talk to the worlds end of Councils and Fathers and Authority of the Church and I know not what insignificant nothings; come, come, there is but one effectual means, which the good *Cardinal Baronius* suggested to his Holiness, *Arise Peter, kill and eat*. Let the Hereticks talk of the kind and merciful Spirit of our Saviour who rebuked his Disciples so sharply for calling for fire from Heaven upon the Samaritans, and told them they did not know what Spirit they are of: let them dispute never so much against the cruelty and unreasonableness of such a way of confuting them; let them muster up never so many sayings of Fathers against it; yet when all is done, what ever becomes of Christianity, it was truly said of *Paul 4. that the Authority of the Roman See depends only upon the Office of the Inquisition*. And that we may think, he was in good earnest when he said it,

Onuphrius

Luke 9.55.

nuphrins tells us it was part of the speech he made to the Cardinals before his death. Was not this think we, a true Vicar of Christ? a man of an Apostolical Spirit? that knew the most effectual means of suppressing heresies and Schisms and advancing the Authority of the Roman See. And that we may not think their opinion is altered in this matter; one of the late Consulters of the Inquisition hath determined that the practice of the Roman Church in the office of the Inquisition is reasonable, pious, useful, and necessary; which he proves by the Testimony of their greatest Doctors. And by which we may easily judge what N. O. and his Brethren think to be the most effectual means of suppressing Sects and Heresies, with the want of which we are contented to be upbraided. But setting this aside we have as many reasonable means; and I think many more of convicting dissenters, than they can pretend to, in the Roman Church.

3. It is very well known that we do endeavour, as much as lyes in us, to reclaim all dissenters; but God never wrought Miracles to cure incorrigible persons, and would not give us to go out of the way of our duty to suppress Sects and Heresies. The greatest Heresies have not effected it; (which made some of the Inquisitors in Italy complain that

*Onuphr. vit.
Pauli 4.*

*Del bene de
officio In-
quisit. part.
1. dub. 162.
Petit. 5. n.
8.*

Ger. B. f.
 dragi Epi-
 flo. ad Car-
 dinal Pisan.

after 40. years experience, wherein they had main-
 destroyed above 100000. Persons for heresie, which
 (as they call it) it was so far from being of Fa-
 suppressed or weakned that it was extremely shall
 strengthened and increased. What wonder is the fo-
 it then, if dissenters should yet continue among
 us, who do not use such Barbarous ways of stop-
 ping the mouths of Hereticks with burning
 lead, or silencing them by a rope and flames?
 But we recommend as much as they can do to
 the people the vertues of *Humility, Obedience,*
due submission to their Spiritual Pastors and Go-
vernours, and that they ought not to usurp their
office, and become their own Guides: which
 N. O. in his conclusion blames us for not doing.
 Yet we do not exact of them a blind obedience,
 we allow them to understand the nature and
 Doctrine of Christianity, which the more they
 do, we are sure they will be so much the better
 Christians and the more easily Governed. So
 that we have no kind of Controversie about
 Church-Authority it self, but what it is, and in
 what manner, and by whom to be exercised;
 but surely N. O. had little to say, when from
 laying down the Principles of Faith, he charges
 me with this most absurd consequence, of de-
 stroying all Church-Authority.

I have thus far considered the main Founda-
 tions upon which N. O. proceeds in opposition
 to my Principles, there is now very little re-
 maining

maining which deserves any Notice: and that
which seems to do it, as about Negative Articles
of Faith, and the marks of the True Church, I
shall have occasion to handle them at large in
the following discourse.

F I N I S.